



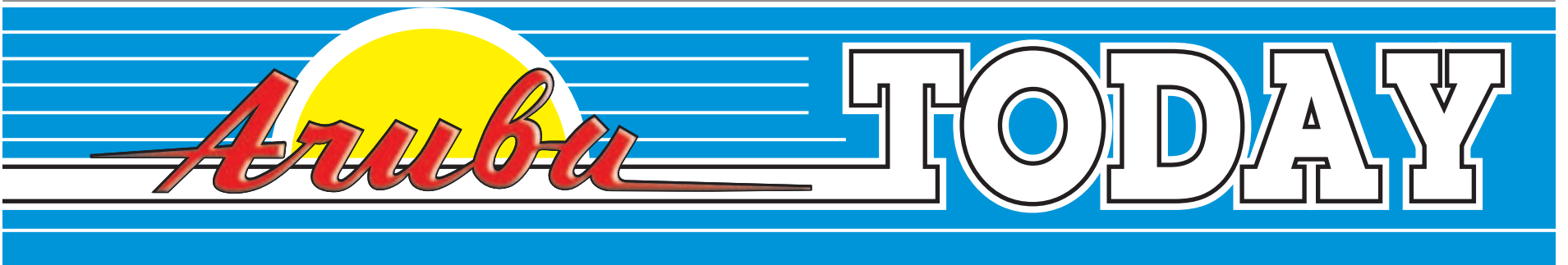
RUSSIA PULLS BACK A BATTALION FROM UKRAINE BORDER

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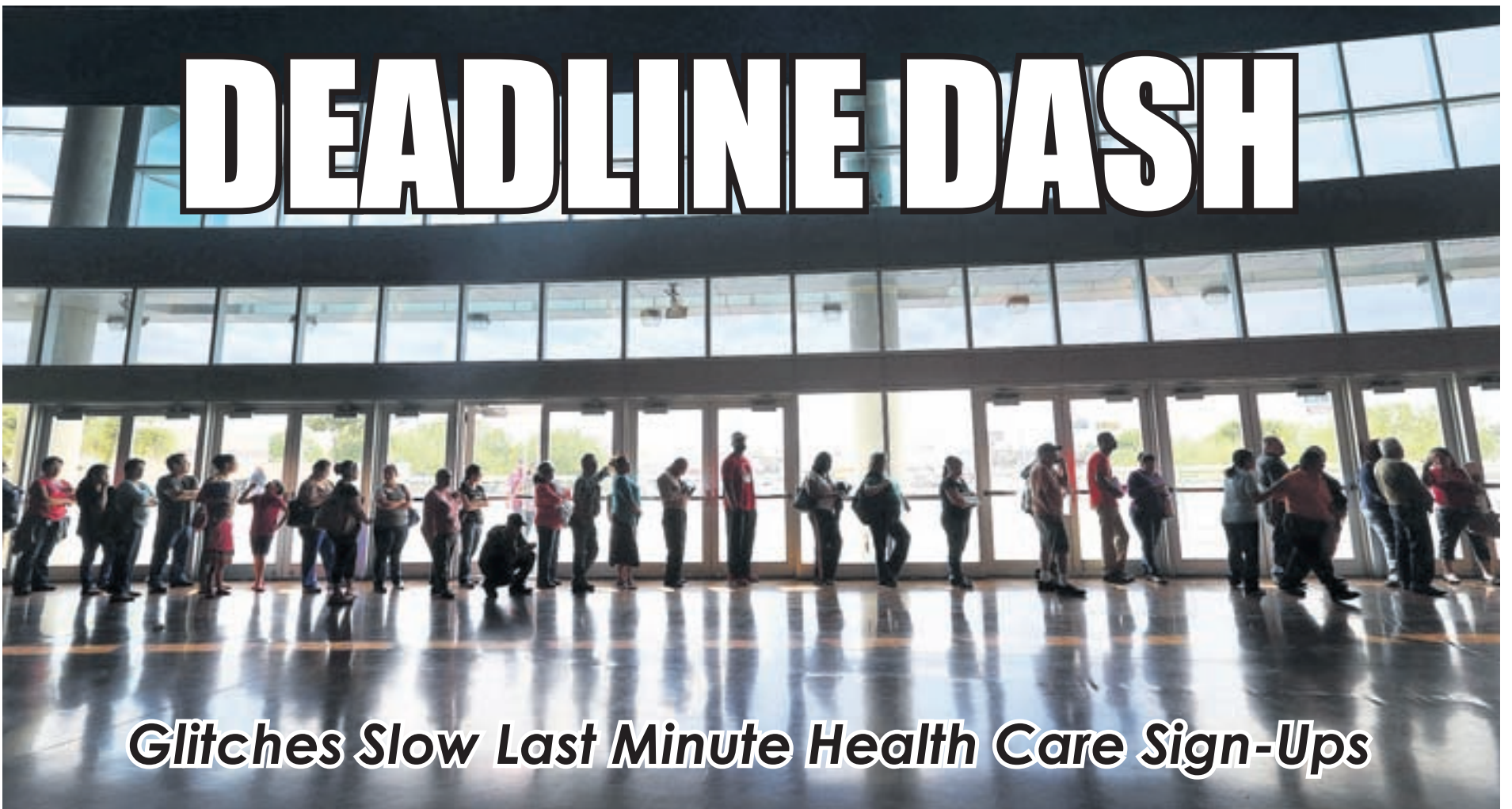


NORTH AND SOUTH KOREAS TRADE FIRE; ISLANDERS RATTLED

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On Top Of The News Email: news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel: +297 582-7800 Tuesday, April 1, 2014



DEADLINE DASH

Glitches Slow Last Minute Health Care Sign-Ups

People line up to enroll for health insurance at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas on Monday, March 31, 2014. Hundreds of thousands of Americans rushed to apply for health insurance Monday, but deadline day for President Barack Obama's overhaul brought long, frustrating waits and a new spate of website ills. (AP Photo/San Antonio Express-News, Jerry Lara)

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of Americans rushed to apply for health insurance Monday, but deadline day for President Barack Obama's overhaul brought long, frustrating waits and a new spate of website ills. At times, more than 125,000 people were simultaneously using HealthCare.gov, straining it beyond its capacity. For long stretches Monday, applicants were shuffled to a virtual waiting room where they could leave an email address and be contacted later. The 2010 passage of the Affordable Care Act has

been the No. 1 legislative achievement of President Barack Obama's terms in the White House. Since taking the majority in the House of Representatives later that year, Republicans have voted more than 50 times to revoke or seriously undermine the program, widely known as Obamacare. Those bills have never made it to the floor in the Democrat-controlled Senate. More than 6 million Americans have signed up for health insurance, some of the policies heavily subsidized for lower income people. That figure met a revised goal set for the

program after the website was found to be nearly unworkable for weeks when the sign-up period began in October. Officials said Monday the site had not crashed but was experiencing very heavy volume. The website, which was receiving 1.5 million visitors a day last week, had recorded about 1.6 million through 2 p.m. EDT. Supporters of the health care law fanned out across the country in a final dash to sign up uninsured Americans. People not signed up for health insurance by the deadline, either through their jobs or on their own, were subject to being fined

by the IRS, and that threat was helping drive the final dash. The administration announced last week that people still in line by midnight would get extra time to enroll. The website stumbled early in the day — out of service for nearly four hours as technicians patched a software bug. Another hiccup in early afternoon temporarily kept new applicants from signing up, and then things slowed further. Overwhelmed by computer problems when launched last fall, the system has been working much better in recent months, but inde-

pendent testers say it still runs slowly. At Chicago's Norwegian American Hospital, people began lining up shortly after 7 a.m. to get help signing up for subsidized private health insurance. Lucy Martinez, an unemployed single mother of two boys, said she'd previously tried to enroll at a clinic in another part of the city but there was always a problem. She'd wait and wait and they wouldn't call her name, or they would ask her for paperwork that she was told earlier she didn't need, she said.

Continued on Page 3

UN court orders Japan to halt Antarctic whaling

MARLISE SIMONS

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PARIS - The United Nations' highest court Monday ordered Japan to halt its annual whaling hunt in the Southern Ocean around Antarctica, saying that its present program was not being carried out for scientific purposes, as Japan has claimed.

In a 12-4 judgment, the International Court of Justice in The Hague found that Japan was in breach of its international obligations by catching and killing minke whales and issuing permits for hunting humpback and fin whales within the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary, established by the In-

ternational Whaling Commission.

Reading a summary of the judgment, presiding Judge Peter Tomka of Slovakia said the present "research program," dating to 2005, has involved the killing of 3,600 minke whales and a number of fin whales, but that its "scientific output to date appears limited." The ruling suggested instead that Japan's whaling hunt served political and economic reasons.

No immediate reaction from Japan was available, although it has said it would abide by any judgment in the case. But a Japanese delegate said in earlier hearings that Japan might

consider withdrawing from the whaling commission, which oversees management of the world's whale populations.

The court left open the possibility for future whale hunting if Japan redesigned its program. Tokyo has said that it needs data to monitor the impact of whales on its fishing industry and to monitor the whale population's recovery from overfishing.

Australia brought the suit against Japan in 2010, accusing the country of using a loophole to get around a 1986 worldwide moratorium on whaling.

The ruling drew immediate praise from environmental

groups, including the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, which has sent fast ships to the remote and icy waters to block and harass Japan's whaling fleet.

"We are very happy with the backing of the International Court," Geert Vons, a representative of Sea Shepherd, said after leaving the court. "We had never expected such a strong ruling, telling Japan to cancel all of its Southern Ocean licenses."

The court also suggested that Japan reconsider a second so-called scientific program in the northern Pacific, but the present case focused only on the Southern Hemisphere. □

Manuel Valls named as new French PM

SYLVIE CORBET

THOMAS ADAMSON

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — President Francois Hollande named former Interior Minister Manuel Valls as France's new prime minister Monday, just 24 hours after his Socialists suffered heavy losses in nationwide municipal elections.

Valls is consistently voted France's most popular Socialist in opinion polls and is considered part of the right wing of the party. He replaces unpopular Jean-Marc Ayrault.

The 51-year-old has drawn comparisons with former conservative French President Nicolas Sarkozy and is also the most popular Socialist among France's conservative right — he wants, for example, to rethink France's 35-hour working week, a Socialist initiative.

In a prerecorded televised speech, Hollande said it was time for a France to enter a "new phase" and pledged Valls would lead a "combative government."

He spelled out some key policy changes that included announcing new unspecified tax cuts and confirming a plan to slash 50-billion euros in government spending.

Valls is the Socialists' hardliner on immigration and security and has held very controversial stances while serving as interior minister. He allowed officials to ban shows by a comic considered anti-Semitic, Dieudonne M'Bala M'Bala and once praised a policy of destroying illegal Roma camps and expelling their residents from the country. Valls was born in Barcelona in 1962 and became naturalized as French 20 years later.

He has four children from a first marriage that ended in divorce, and since 2010 has been married to his second wife, the distinguished violinist Anne Gravaoin. □

Russia pulls back a battalion from Ukraine border

LAURA MILLS

V. ISACHENKOV

Associated Press

SIMFEROPOL, Crimea (AP)

— Russia said Monday it was pulling a battalion of several hundred troops away from the Ukrainian border but kept tens of thousands in place, prompting a worried response from the Kiev government about what the U.S. warned was still a "tremendous buildup."

Russia moved quickly to strengthen its economic hold on Crimea, with Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev arriving in the newly annexed peninsula with promises of funds for improved power supplies, water lines, education and pensions for the elderly.

Russia's takeover of the strategic Black Sea region, its troop buildup near Ukraine's border and its attempts to compel constitutional changes in Ukraine have markedly raised tensions with the West and prompted fears that Moscow intends to invade other areas of its neighbor.

However, Russian President Vladimir Putin told German Chancellor Angela Merkel in a phone call Monday that some troops were being withdrawn from the Ukraine border, Merkel's office said. The withdrawal involved a battalion of

about 500 troops, Russian news reports said.

The U.S. reacted cautiously to the Russian troop movement, with Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel saying that "tens of thousands" of Russian forces still

"We have information that Russia is carrying out incomprehensible maneuvers on the border with Ukraine," Ukrainian Foreign Ministry spokesman Yevgen Perebyinis said. "Troops in some places

of these movements."

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry also discussed Ukraine by phone Monday, a day after holding talks in Paris, the Russian foreign ministry



Ukrainian tank T-62 placed on a platform to be transported to the Ukraine from the Ostryakovo railway station not far from Simferopol, Crimea, Monday, March 31, 2014. The new Russian tanks T-72B will be stationed on former Ukrainian military bases.

(AP Photo/Pavel Golovkin)

remained along the Ukrainian border, a situation he called "a tremendous buildup." The new government in Ukraine said the action only increased its uneasiness about Russia's intentions.

are moving backward, some of them are moving forward. Which is why, obviously, we are worried by these movements of armed forces. We have no clear explanation from the Russian side about the aim

said.

A senior U.S. official said Lavrov had promised Kerry that a division of Russian troops would be pulled back; a division generally consists of thousands of troops. □

AP sources: US considering early release of spy Pollard

Associated Press
WASHINGTON/JERUSALEM (AP) — The United States is talking with Israel about releasing convicted spy Jonathan Pollard early from his life sentence as an incen-



This photo shows Jonathan Pollard speaking during an interview in a conference room at the Federal Correction Institution in Butner, N.C. An AP source says the US is talking with Israel about early release of Pollard for concessions.
(AP Photo/Karl DeBlaker)

tive to the Israelis in the troubled Mideast peace negotiations, people familiar with the talks said Monday. Releasing Pollard, a thorn in U.S.-Israeli relations for three decades, would be an extraordinary step underscoring the urgency of U.S. peace efforts.

Two people describing the talks cautioned that such a release — which would be a dramatic turnaround from previous refusals — was far from certain and that discussions with Israel on the matter were continuing. Both spoke only on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the talks on the record.

In return for the release, the people close to the talks said, Israel would have to undertake significant concessions to the Palestinians in Middle East negotiations. Such concessions could include some kind of freeze on Israeli settlements in disputed territory, the release of Palestinian prisoners beyond those Israel has already agreed to free and a guarantee that Israel would stay at the negotiating table beyond an end-of-April deadline.

Secretary of State John Kerry was meeting with chief Palestinian negotia-

tor Saab Erekat and another Palestinian official late Monday, then planned an early Tuesday meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

U.S. defense and intelligence officials have consistently argued against releasing Pollard.

Pollard, an American Jew, was a civilian intelligence analyst for the U.S. Navy when he gave thousands of classified documents to his Israeli handlers. The Israelis recruited him to pass along U.S. secrets including satellite photos and data on Soviet weaponry in the 1980s. He was arrested by FBI agents in Washington in 1985 after unsuccessfully seeking refuge at the Israeli Embassy in Washington. He pleaded guilty to leaking classified documents to Israel and received a life sentence. President Barack Obama and his predecessors have refused to release Pollard despite pleas from Israeli leaders.

Apart from any negotiations in the meantime, Pollard could be released from prison on Nov. 21, 2015 — 30 years after his arrest. He has been serving his sentence at a federal facility in Butner, N.C.

White House spokesman Jay Carney on Monday declined to discuss any possible deal. "He is a person who is convicted of espionage and is serving his sentence. I don't have any updates on his situation," Carney told reporters at the White House. Ahead of his trip to the Middle East last March, Obama told Israeli television station Channel 2 that Pollard "is an individual who committed a very serious crime here in the United States." "He's been serving his time," Obama said. "I have no plans for releasing Jonathan Pollard immediately but what I am going to be doing is to make sure that he, like every other American who's been sentenced, is accorded the same kinds of review and the same examination of the equities that any other individual would provide." □

Glitches slow last minute Health Care sign-ups

Continued from front

Her diabetic mother would start sweating so they'd have to leave.

The insurance markets — or exchanges — offer subsidized private health insurance to people who don't have access to coverage

potentially eligible for extensions granted by the administration.

Those include people who had begun enrolling by the deadline but didn't finish, perhaps because of errors, missing information or website glitches. The government says it will accept pa-

by buying a policy directly from an insurer. They'll just have to pay the full premium themselves, although in a few states there may be an exception to that rule as well.

Supporters of the law held their breath early Monday when the website was tak-



Applicant Daniel Padilla, 34, waits during a health care enrollment event at AltaMed Health Insurance Resource Center, Monday, March 31, 2014, in Los Angeles. Monday was the open enrollment deadline for signing up for insurance under the health care act.

(AP Photo/Ringo H.W. Chiu)

through their jobs. The federal government is taking the lead in 36 states, while 14 other states plus Washington, D.C., are running their own enrollment websites.

New York, running its own site, reported more than 812,000 had signed up by Sunday morning, nearly 100,000 of them last week. However, it's unclear what those numbers may mean. The administration hasn't said how many of the 6 million people nationally who had signed up before the weekend ultimately closed the deal by paying their first month's premiums. Also unknown is how many were previously uninsured — the real test of Obama's health care overhaul. In addition, the law expands coverage for low-income people through Medicaid, but only about half the states have agreed to implement that option.

Though March 31 was the last day officially to sign up, millions of people are

per applications until April 7 and take as much time as necessary to handle unfinished cases on Health-Care.gov. Rules may vary in states running their own insurance marketplaces.

The administration is also offering special extensions to make up for all sorts of problems that might have kept people from getting enrolled on time: Natural disasters. Domestic abuse. Website malfunctions. Errors by insurance companies. Mistakes by application counselors.

Those who still don't get health insurance run the risk that the Internal Revenue Service will fine them next year for remaining uninsured. It remains to be seen how aggressively the penalties called for in the law are enforced.

Also, the new markets don't have a monopoly on health insurance. People not already covered by an employer or a government program can comply with the insurance mandate

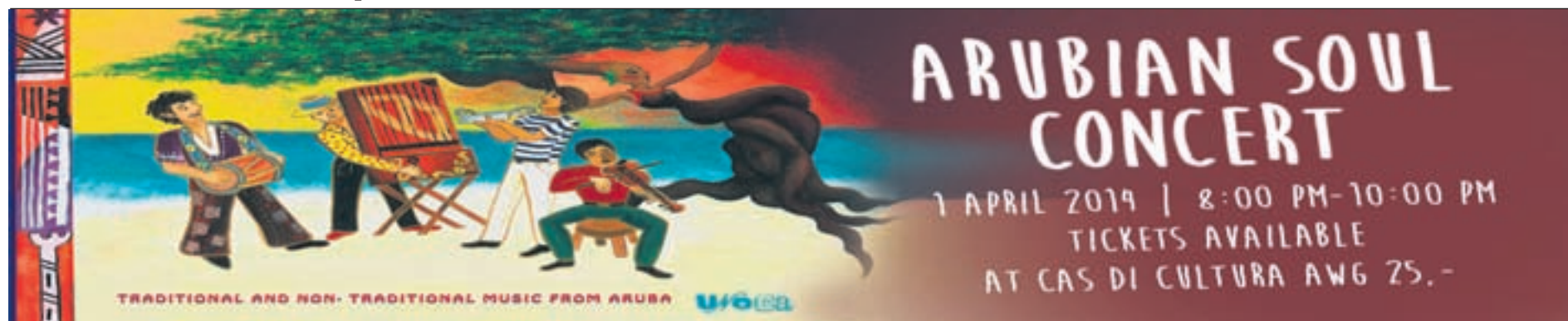
en down.

Administration spokesman Aaron Albright said the site undergoes "regular nightly maintenance" during off-peak hours and the period was extended because of a "technical problem." He did not say what the problem was, but an official statement called it "a software bug" unrelated to application volume.

House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio said Monday that Republicans remain committed to repealing Obama's law.

But its supporters are wasting no time trying to shape the next open enrollment season, starting Nov. 15. The advocacy group Families USA will announce ten recommendations Tuesday to make the system more consumer-friendly.

They range from providing more in-person assistance with sign-ups, to eliminating premium penalties for smokers, to aligning enrollment with tax-filing season. □



Man who shot at White House in 2011 sentenced to 25 years

JESSICA GRESKO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — An Idaho man who pleaded guilty to firing an assault rifle at the White House in 2011, striking the executive mansion more than half a dozen times, was sentenced Monday to 25 years in prison.

Prosecutors initially charged Oscar Ramiro Ortega-Hernandez with attempting to assassinate President Barack Obama but agreed to drop the charge as part of a plea deal last year. Ortega-Hernandez instead pleaded guilty to two charges including damaging the home. The president and first lady Michelle Obama were not home at the time of the shooting, and no one was injured. But prosecutors said Ortega-Hernandez, 23, jeopardized the lives of numerous others. That included two other members of the Obama family who were at the home as well as White House employees and staff, Secret Service agents, tourists and bystanders. Prosecutors said the bullets from Ortega-Hernandez's gun caused nearly \$100,000 worth of damage to the home. They asked that Ortega-Hernandez spend 27 ½ years in prison.

Ortega-Hernandez himself told the judge he was "deeply sorry" for putting people in danger when he drove by the White House on the night of Nov. 11, 2011 and shot at the home from his car. He said that he "never meant to hurt anybody."

"I'm not a bad person. I made a huge mistake," he said before pleading for a 10-year sentence.

Ortega-Hernandez's lawyers argued that he was suffering from extreme depression and mental stress at the time of the shooting and was under the misguided belief that the end of the world was coming. Ortega-Hernandez's lawyers said his motivation in firing a gun at the White House was to "call attention to what he believed was the coming apocalypse."

They said in written filings with the court that he rejected shooting at locations in Idaho Falls, where he is from, as well as at the Grand Canyon and Statue of Liberty, because he didn't think they would attract enough attention.

One of Ortega-Hernandez's lawyers, Robert Feitel, stressed Monday that his client never intended to assassinate the president. He noted that Ortega-Hernandez pleaded guilty instead to the charges of "injury to a dwelling and placing lives in jeopardy," as well as "using, carrying and discharging a firearm during a crime of violence." But prosecutor George Varghese called Ortega-Hernandez a "lone wolf domestic terrorist" during Monday's hearing, which lasted approximately two hours, and said he "placed countless lives in jeopardy." Varghese described how Ortega-Hernandez practiced using his gun in Idaho. He also detailed statements from friends and acquaintances who said Ortega-Hernandez referred to himself as "the modern day Jesus," railed against the government and said he wanted to kill Obama, calling him "the anti-Christ." □



An American flag hangs from the only cedar post left standing at the scene of a deadly mudslide, Monday, March 31, 2014, in Oso, Wash.

(AP Photo/The Herald, Sofia Jaramillo, Pool)

Washington Mudslide: Official number of victims rises to 24

LISA BAUMANN
MANUEL VALDES
Associated Press
DARRINGTON, Washington
(AP) — Crews searching through the muck and devastation wrought by Washington's deadly mudslide are finding more human remains, bringing the official death toll to 24.

Seventeen of those 24 victims have been positively identified, the Snohomish County medical examiner's office said Monday afternoon. Previously, the official death toll was 21, with 15 victims identified.

More than two dozen people remain missing, authorities have said.

Steve Harris, a division supervisor for the search effort, said search teams are learning more about the force of the March 22 slide, and that is helping them better locate victims in a debris field that is 70 feet (21 meters) deep in places.

"There's a tremendous amount of force and energy behind this," Harris said of the slide. He didn't provide further details.

Harris said search dogs are the primary tool for finding remains in the small, mountainside community about 55 miles (88 kilometers) northeast of Seattle. He said searchers are finding human remains four to six times per day. Sometimes crews only find partial remains, which makes the identification process harder. A makeshift road completed over the weekend links one side of the 300-acre debris field to the other. Searchers have had to contend with treacherous conditions, including household chemicals, septic tanks, gasoline and propane containers. When rescuers and dogs leave the site, they are hosed off by hazardous materials crews. Gov. Jay Inslee on Monday

asked President Barack Obama for a major disaster declaration in Snohomish County to make programs available to help individuals, households and businesses.

Last week, a federal emergency declaration was approved that provided a federal disaster team and specialized personnel to the slide area.

Estimated financial losses have reached \$10 million, Inslee said, adding that about 30 families need assistance with housing, along with personal and household goods. The estimated losses include nearly \$7 million in structures and more than \$3 million in their contents, Inslee's letter said.

Members of the Seattle Seahawks football team and Seattle Sounders soccer team were scheduled to visit with community members Monday evening. □

'Ten Most Wanted' suspect pleads not guilty in NY

FRANK ELTMAN
Associated Press

CENTRAL ISLIP, New York (AP) — A purported member of the El Salvador-based MS-13 street gang charged in the killings of his 19-year-old girlfriend and her toddler son was ordered held without bail during his arraignment Monday.

Juan Elias Garcia, 21, a native of El Salvador who spoke through an interpreter, entered a not guilty plea to murder, murder conspiracy and firearms charges before U.S. District Court Judge Joseph Bianco in Central Islip, on Long Island.

He was captured last week in Nicaragua, one day after being placed on the FBI's list of its "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives."

The courthouse is in the same town where authorities say Garcia and three others participated in the February 2010 killings of Vanessa Argueta and her 2-year-old son, Diego Torres. They said the woman was killed in retaliation for her association with suspected members of other street gangs.

About two dozen members of Argueta's family were in

the tightly secured courtroom. Many wore buttons with a picture of the mother and child.

Several members of Garcia's family also were present. They declined to speak with reporters. Defense attorney Barry Rhodes did not comment.

Garcia, who authorities say was the first MS-13 gang member to make the FBI's most wanted list, allegedly brought Argueta to a wooded area after promising to take her to dinner. Argueta was accompanied by two other reputed MS-13 members who had received permission from the gang's leader to carry out the killing, according to the FBI.

Garcia and a co-defendant both fired shots, killing Argueta, authorities said. After seeing his mother killed, authorities said the toddler began crying. He was shot once in the head, but clutched at Garcia's leg before one of Garcia's co-conspirators fired a second, fatal shot into the little boy's head, according to authorities.

The bodies of mother and child were found the following day.

In a statement Friday, the



In this Monday, March 31, 2014 photo, Joshua Argueta speaks to the media outside the U.S. District Courthouse in Central Islip, N.Y. Argueta attended the arraignment of Juan Elias Garcia, who is accused of murdering Argueta's sister Vanessa and her 2-year-old son Diego Torres. Garcia, who was on the FBI's list of "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives" until his capture in Nicaragua last week, pleaded not guilty and is being held without bail.

(AP Photo/Frank Eltman)

FBI said Garcia had surrendered and "voluntarily returned to the United States to face charges." He was indicted last month, shortly after he turned 21. That is when he lost federal juvenile protection status that had prevented authorities from naming him publicly. "News media outlets, both

domestic and abroad, displayed Garcia's photograph to members of the public hoping someone would turn him in," Venizelos said following the capture. "The pressure generated by this publicity was too much for Garcia to bear, resulting in his surrender and return to the

United States."

MS-13 has a strong presence throughout the U.S., particularly in areas with substantial Salvadoran populations such as Southern California, the District of Columbia and northern Virginia. The gang also is allied with several Mexican drug cartels. □

GM, US safety agency face Congress over recalls

DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — The head of America's auto safety watchdog is blaming General Motors for a failure to act sooner to warn consumers of a defect in small cars that is linked to 13 deaths.

For its part, GM continues its efforts to show regulators and consumers that it's more focused on safety, announcing the recall of another 1.5 million vehicles on Monday.

In written testimony released ahead of a Tuesday House subcommittee hearing, acting National Highway Traffic Safety Administration chief David Friedman says GM had information connecting defective ignition switches to the non-deployment of air

bags, but didn't share it until last month.

GM CEO Mary Barra will also testify.

Committee members will press Barra and Friedman to explain why neither the company nor the safety agency moved to recall millions of small cars with a defective ignition switch, even though GM knew of the problem as early as 2001.

"Sitting here today, I cannot tell you why it took years for a safety defect to be announced in (the small car) program, but I can tell you that we will find out," Barra said in prepared testimony submitted to the subcommittee.

GM has recalled 2.6 million cars for the faulty switch. That recall prompted GM to name a new safety chief

and review its recall processes.

With Monday's recall, GM has now recalled 6.3 million

vehicles since February. GM estimates the actions will cost it \$750 million.

The House hearing — and a

separate one Wednesday before a Senate subcommittee — will likely be tense and emotional. □

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Prosecutor: Woman stabbed beau 25 times with heel

JUAN A. LOZANO
Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — A woman attacked her boyfriend in a fit of rage, sat on him after knocking him down and then stabbed him to death with the stiletto heel of her shoe, striking him at least 25 times in the face, a prosecutor told jurors Monday.

Ana Trujillo's lawyer, though, said it was she who was attacked, and she defended herself from 59-year-old Alf Stefan Andersson using the only weapon she had available.

Trujillo, 45, a native of Mexico, had reconciled.

The prosecutor described Andersson as mild-mannered and quiet, and Trujillo as hot-tempered.

On the night of the slaying, the couple was out drinking before they returned to Andersson's apartment. Mickelson said Trujillo got angry after arriving home and that the two began arguing.

Mickelson told jurors that during the confrontation, Andersson was injured and fell on his back. Trujillo sat on Andersson, preventing him from getting up, and

a wall, grabbed her and threw her over a couch.

"She couldn't breathe. And she was begging and begging (Andersson) to let her go. ... He started suffocating her. ... She did the only thing she could do, take a weapon at her disposal, which was a shoe, and started hitting him," Carroll said.

Rosemary Gomez, a cab driver who drove Trujillo and Andersson back to his condominium on the night of the slaying told jurors she had picked up the couple from a Houston bar.

Gomez said that during



Ana Lilia Trujillo, left, sits in the courtroom before opening arguments in her trial, Monday, March 31, 2014, in Houston. Trujillo, 45, is charged with murder, accused of killing her 59-year-old boyfriend, Alf Stefan Andersson, at his Museum District high-rise condominium in June 2013.

(AP Photo/Houston Chronicle, Brett Coomer)

Testimony began Monday in Trujillo's murder trial. Prosecutors say she killed Andersson, who was a University of Houston professor and researcher, during an argument at his condominium in June. She is free on a \$100,000 bond.

During opening statements, prosecutor Sarah Mickelson said Trujillo had a history of being angry and aggressive in her contentious on-again, off-again relationship with Andersson, a native of Sweden who became a U.S. citizen.

Mickelson said that earlier in June, Andersson and

repeatedly struck him in the face and head with her shoe, she said.

"The one thing we can be sure of in this case is that Ana Trujillo is not a victim. Ana Trujillo struck Stefan Andersson 25 times with the heel of her shoe while he lay on the floor and bled out," Mickelson said.

Trujillo's attorney, John Carroll, described Andersson as an alcoholic who would become violent toward Trujillo. He said on the night of Andersson's death, Trujillo planned to leave him and go to a friend's house, but Andersson slammed her against

the short drive home, Trujillo was belligerent toward her, cursing as she tried to tell Gomez what streets to take. Gomez said Andersson was embarrassed by Trujillo's behavior and that "he never cursed. He never got out of line."

Gomez said she told Andersson, "You need to be careful. Your friend is out of control."

"He got my hand and squeezed it and said, 'I'll be OK,'" Gomez said.

Gomez testified she was so worried for Andersson that she got out of her cab, held Andersson's hands and prayed for him. □

Asiana Airlines: secondary cause of SF crash was bad software

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By **MATTHEW L. WALD**

WASHINGTON - While the world has been fixated on the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, the investigation in the crash of another Boeing 777, the Asiana flight into San Francisco last July, is plodding forward, and the Korean carrier is raising arguments that threaten to put another question mark over the jetliner.

The circumstances of the crashes could not have been more different; Asiana's crash, into the sea wall in front of a runway at San Francisco International Airport, was captured on video, with debris spread over a few hundred feet of runway. Three people died and scores were injured, but most people walked away. In contrast, everyone on the Malaysia plane is presumed lost and the cause is, for now, a mystery.

In San Francisco, the prime cause was quickly clear; even Asiana faulted its crew for failing to notice that the airplane was flying far too slowly to stay in the air. But it is also blaming "inconsistencies in the aircraft's automation logic."

The carrier said Monday in a filing with the National Transportation Safety Board that bad software design "led to the unexpected disabling of airspeed protection without adequate warning to the flight crew" and that a system to warn the crew of low airspeed did not sound soon enough. The airline also said that the approach ordered by air traffic controllers "led to an excessive pilot workload during the final approach."

Boeing has focused on the crew's failure to maintain proper airspeed, which is expected to be listed by the NTSB as the probable cause of the crash. Asiana's filing is an effort by the airline to have the plane's design characteristics listed among the contributing factors. The board's conclusions are not admissible in court, but its ranking of factors often influences how a carrier's insurance company and the plane's builder apportion the damage settlements or court judgments. In the Asiana crash, the crew believed that an auto-throttle would manipulate the engines to keep the plane's airspeed within the range needed for a safe landing, somewhat like the way the cruise control in a car will adjust the throttle to keep the speed constant. It became obvious in the first few days after the crash that because of a quirk in two tightly linked systems, the autopilot and the auto-throttle, and because the crew had manually adjusted the throttles at one point, the auto-throttle had gone into "sleep" mode.

This characteristic is well known and occurs when the autopilot is in a mode called flight level change, which is abbreviated on the relevant cockpit button as "FLCH." The abbreviation has given rise to a nickname the pilots use for the characteristic, "the flitch trap." After the crash, NTSB investigators were told by the specialists who train Asiana pilots that not only were the three men in the cockpit warned about the flitch trap, but they had been told that they could expect it while landing in San Francisco because the typical approach at the airport required a fast descent and extensive use of the autopilot in different modes.

But Thomas Haueter, a former director of the office of aviation safety at the board and now a consultant to the airline, said that the flitch trap was "a bit of a setup for the unwary."

If the crew had simply turned the auto-throttle off, he said, a separate system would have kicked in to keep the engines running hard enough to prevent aerodynamic stall. But with the auto-throttle in "sleep" mode, "there's no protection at all; you've got nothing," Haueter said. □



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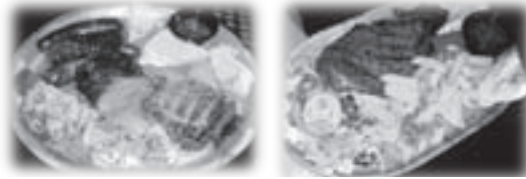
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US Financial FrontP:

Yellen states job market needs low rates 'for some time'

MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen made clear Monday that she thinks the still-subpar U.S. job market will continue to need the help of low interest rates "for some

time," Yellen suggested that the Fed could start raising short-term rates six months after it halts its bond purchases, which most economists expect by year's end. A short-term rate increase would elevate borrowing costs and could hurt stock

the Fed's leadership in February. Stocks, which had been up before Yellen began speaking, rose further on her remarks. The Dow Jones industrial average closed up about 134 points. Low rates tend to lead some in-

needed to encourage borrowing and spending. Economists said they viewed Yellen's comments as a message that even though the Fed is trimming its bond purchases, it's nowhere near moving to raise its benchmark short-term

len described the personal stories of three people who had lost their jobs during the recession and struggled to find work.

"They are a reminder that there are real people behind the statistics," Yellen said. She noted the struggles of a medical claims processor, a printing plant worker and a construction worker who lost their jobs during the Great Recession.

"The past six years have been difficult for many Americans, but the hardships faced by some have shattered lives and families," she said. "Too many people know firsthand how devastating it is to lose a job at which you had succeeded and be unable to find another; to run through your savings and even lose your home."

Yellen said that while the unemployment rate has fallen from a peak of 10 percent in October 2009 to 6.7 percent in February, by many measures the job market remains weak. She said she and her Fed colleagues think an unemployment rate between 5.2 percent and 5.6 percent would be "consistent with maximum sustainable employment."

As she did at her first news conference two weeks ago, Yellen said she monitors measures beyond the unemployment rate in assessing the job market. These include the percentage of unemployed workers who have been out of work for more than six months and a gauge of people without jobs who have stopped looking for one or who have had to take a part-time job even though they would like full-time work. □



Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen speaks during a news conference at the Federal Reserve in Washington. Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen made clear Monday that she thinks the still-subpar U.S. job market will continue to need the help of low interest rates "for some time."

(AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

time." Yellen's remarks signaled that even after the Fed phases out its monthly bond purchases later this year, it has no plans to raise a key short-term rate anytime soon. Her remarks sent a reassuring message to investors, many of whom had grown anxious that the Fed might raise short-term rates by mid-2015. Their concerns were stirred two weeks ago, when Yel-

prices. But on Monday, Yellen indicated that the Fed still thinks rates should remain low to stimulate borrowing, spending and economic growth. "I think this extraordinary commitment is still needed and will be for some time, and I believe that view is widely held by my fellow policymakers at the Fed," Yellen said in her first major speech since taking over

vestors to shift money into stocks and thereby raise stock prices. Speaking to a national conference on community reinvestment in Chicago, Yellen described the U.S. job market as less than healthy despite steady improvement since the recession ended nearly five years ago. She said the difficulty many people are still having finding full-time work shows that low rates are still

rate, which has been at a record low near zero since December 2008. "Chair Yellen pulled out just about every dovish tool in the box as she highlighted that the economy needs extraordinary support for some time," said Bricklin Dwyer, an economist at BNP Paribas. Dwyer said he thinks the Fed's first rate hike will come in early 2016. In an unusual touch for a speech by a Fed chief, Yel-

Big Ears Music Festival:

Festivalgoers heard whatever they wanted to hear

BEN RATLIFF

© 2014 New York Times

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. - The name should give the answer away, but there is a little bit of shadow chasing in the question of the essence of the wide-ranging three-day Big Ears music festival, which finished up its third edition here Sunday.

It is not a perfectly wrapped present for jazz fans, rap nerds, the rustic Americana brigade, dance-music kids, metal-heads, avant-garde obscurantists, post-college hipster generalists or the classically trained. Its literature will not elucidate: There was not a name of a single musical genre in the opening paragraphs of the About page on its website this year. That's something, especially at a time when the unseen forces of digital music-data companies are defining American tastes, and using genre as the basic tool of figuring out who you are and how you can be sold. Sorry: How you can be sold to.

But it's got to be about something, right? It's partly about classical music co-existing with, and cross-referencing, popular music, and yes, those are impoverished and misleading terms. I saw and heard over the weekend some loud, aggressive, viscid music that happened to be notated: the Romanian composer Iancu Dumitrescu's "South Pole," played by Stephen O'Malley and Oren Ambarchi on laptops and electric guitars. I also saw some non-notated music that was pretty streamlined and orderly: for instance, Mark McGuire's twinkly, benevolent, yoga-time instrumentals for guitar and electronics.

But more than partly, this year's festival - attendance was a little under 2,000 each day - was about repetition and looping, and the intimation of eternity or cyclical time that these strategies lend to the composer, or, more important, to the listener. This sort of thing transcends any idea

of genre and could be found all over the place through the weekend, in the notated and non-notated, from composers and musicians of three generations, in big theaters and small clubs.

Those strategies were sure enough there in "Loop," a new piece composed by the Radiohead guitarist Jonny Greenwood, and played by him Saturday, and in John Adams' 1978

in Body/Head, the duo of Kim Gordon and Bill Nace; in the intersecting rhythm trails of Steve Reich's "Music for 18 Musicians," delivered with authority by Ensemble Signal; and in the sonic and philosophical attack of two performances by the Japanese improviser Keiji Haino.

What all this adds up to is that Big Ears seems to be a festival about the experience of listening, full

to AC's founder Ashley Capps, because plans for Reich as the central figure for the 2011 edition fell through because of calendar restrictions, and partly because Capps grew too busy dealing with other concerns, including Bonnaroo, in Manchester, Tenn., and the management of the historic Tennessee and Bijou Theaters here on Gay Street. (I asked Capps this year, as I did at the two

The city is responding: The festival sold four times as many weekend passes this year as in 2010, and it has given rise to two smaller rebel festivals (or, since this is the courteous South, "companion" festivals): Hello City and one with a vulgar name. They were held in small clubs and a wood-and-iron artists' workshop in the Happy Holler neighborhood north of downtown; they were



Oren Ambarchi, left, performs with Stephen O'Malley at the Knoxville Museum of Art during the Big Ears music festival in Knoxville, Tenn., March 30, 2014. The three-day event finished its third edition Sunday, featuring a diverse range of progressive and experimental acts that coexist across genres.

(Mike Belleme/The New York Times)

"Shaker Loops," performed Sunday afternoon by soloists from the Wordless Music Orchestra, without a conductor, so that the gradual accelerandos in the piece had to be accomplished by the seven-member group itself as a self-regulating body.

They also appeared in sets of enveloping, fractured electronic music by Tim Hecker and Oneohtrix Point Never; in an evening concert, and a noontime laughter workshop, by the zither player, singer and meditation leader Laraaji;

stop, rather than listening to genre X or tradition Y. It gives concertgoers - in comfortable theaters, in a comfortable town without a lot of other distractions - as much power as a composer or performer in determining what music means, gambling that those concertgoers might over time grow a culture around that feeling.

Produced by AC Entertainment, based in Knoxville, the festival started in 2009, repeated in 2010 and has been on hiatus since - partly, according

previous festivals, to define the festival. This time he said it was really about "overcoming resistance": not just a listener's resistance to going outside a familiar genre, but resistance to the thought that a festival like this should happen here, not in New York or San Francisco.)

Big Ears has come back with the help of a multi-year grant from the Aslan Foundation, through the Knoxville Central Business Improvement District.

The amount starts with around \$300,000 in 2014.

bustling.

Within the Big Ears schedule there were connections to be drawn.

There was the one between Reich, 77, and Greenwood, 42: On Sunday in the Tennessee theater, Greenwood played Reich's "Electric Counterpoint."

There was the idea of psychoacoustics: the phasing, in-and-out-of-unison effects in Reich's music and also in the engulfing sound of O'Malley's performances, with multiple amplifier stacks. □



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Koreas trade fire; island residents in shelters

South Korean marine LVT-7 landing craft sail to shores through smoke screens during the U.S.-South Korea joint military exercises called Ssangyong, part of the Foal Eagle military exercises, in Pohang, South Korea, Monday, March 31, 2014. South Korea said North Korea has announced plans to conduct live-fire drills near the rivals' disputed western sea boundary. The planned drills Monday come after an increase in threatening rhetoric from Pyongyang and a series of rocket and ballistic missile launches in an apparent protest against the annual military exercises by Seoul and Washington. (AP Photo/Ahn Young-joon)

HYUNG-JIN KIM
JUNG-YOON CHOI
Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)

— North and South Korea fired hundreds of artillery shells into each other's waters Monday in a flare-up of animosity that forced residents of five front-line South Korean islands to evacuate to shelters for several hours, South Korean officials said.

The exchange of fire into the Yellow Sea followed Pyongyang's sudden announcement that it would conduct live-fire drills in seven areas north of the Koreas' disputed maritime boundary. North Korea routinely test-fires artillery and missiles into the ocean but rarely discloses those plans in advance. The announcement was seen as an expression of Pyongyang's frustration at making little progress in its

recent push to win outside aid.

North Korea fired 500 rounds of artillery shells over more than three hours, about 100 of which fell south of the sea boundary, South Korean Defense Ministry spokesman Kim Min-seok said. South Korea responded by firing 300 shells into North Korean waters, he said.

No shells from either side were fired at any land or military installations, but Kim called the North's artillery firing a provocation aimed at testing Seoul's security posture. There was no immediate comment from North Korea.

In Washington, White House spokesman Jonathan Lalley called North Korea's actions "dangerous and provocative" and said they would further aggravate tensions in the region.

Monday's exchange was relatively mild in the history of animosity and violence between the Koreas, but there is worry in Seoul that an increasingly dissatisfied North Korea could repeat the near-daily barrage of war rhetoric it carried out last spring, when tensions soared as Pyongyang threatened nuclear strikes on Washington and Seoul in response to condemnation of its third nuclear test. Residents on front-line South Korean islands spent several hours in shelters during the firing, and officials temporarily halted ferry service linking the islands to the mainland. Kang Myeong-sung, speaking from a shelter on Yeonpyeong island, which is in sight of North Korean territory, said he didn't hear any fighter jets but heard the boom of artillery fire.

The poorly marked west-

ern sea boundary has been the scene of several bloody naval skirmishes between the Koreas in recent years. In March 2010, a South Korean warship sank in the area following a torpedo attack blamed on Pyongyang that left 46 sailors dead. North Korea denies responsibility for the sinking. In November 2010, a North Korean artillery bombardment killed four South Koreans on Yeonpyeong.

The North has gradually dialed down its threats since last year's tirade and has sought improved ties with South Korea in what foreign analysts say is an attempt to lure investment and aid. There has been no major breakthrough, however, with Washington and Seoul calling on the North to first take disarmament steps to prove its sincerity about improving ties.

Recent weeks have seen an increase in threatening rhetoric and a series of North Korean rocket and ballistic missile launches considered acts of protest by Pyongyang against annual ongoing springtime military exercises by Seoul and Washington. The North calls the South Korea-U.S. drills a rehearsal for invasion; the allies say they're routine and defensive.

"The boneheads appear to have completely forgotten the fact that Yeonpyeong island was smashed by our military's bolt of lightning a few years ago," a North Korean military official, Yun Jong Bum, said Monday, according to the North's official Korean Central News Agency. Pyongyang also threatened Sunday to conduct a fourth nuclear test, though Seoul sees no signs it's imminent. □

Egypt: Al-Jazeera reporters plead for release

SARAH EL DEEB

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Three Al-Jazeera journalists on trial in Egypt directly asked the judge on Monday to release them, insisting the terrorism charges against them were preposterous. The judge denied the request for bail by Australian Peter Greste, Canadian-Egyptian Mohammed Fahmy and Baher Mohammed

during the fourth hearing in the trial that opened on Feb. 20.

The trial marks the first time journalists have been charged with terrorism-related offenses in Egypt, drawing international criticism.

The three, along 17 others, face terrorism-related charges based on the

Egyptian authorities' accusations that they provided a platform to the Muslim Brotherhood group of ousted President Mohammed Morsi, which the government has declared a terrorist organization.

Their defenders say they were just doing their job as journalists.

Greste, Fahmy and Mohammed spoke after the

judge took the unusual move of allowing all the defendants out of the cage, which serves as the dock in Egyptian trials, to approach the bench and address him directly with requests.

Besides the three journalists, five other defendants were in court Monday, with the rest being tried in absentia. "The idea that I could

have an association with the Muslim Brotherhood is frankly preposterous," Greste told the judge, Mohammed Nagi Shehata. He said that he was an award-winning journalist with years of experience and that he constitutes no threat to anybody in Egypt, adding he had been in the country only two weeks before his arrest. □

Syrian army pounds rebels in Assad's home province

BARBARA SURK

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Syrian government forces backed by militia fighters and warplanes pounded rebel units in Latakia province on Monday in a desperate effort to regain control of towns and villages in President Bashar Assad's ancestral homeland recently lost to an opposition offensive.

Activists said fighting between Assad loyalists and rebels was concentrated in the northern edge of Latakia province.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said government troops bombarded rebel positions with artillery as they tried to capture several strategic hilltops. Fighter jets also carried out several airstrikes.

State TV said army troops captured one of the hilltop positions known as the Ob-

servatory 45. It is a strategic post that is key to both sides because it has a commanding view of the contested surrounding mountains and green plains below. The rebels and op-

position groups have not confirmed its capture.

It later showed footage of what it said were rebels killed in the area during the government offensive. Several bearded men in

military uniforms lay dead, covered with blood, as government troops stood in the background.

Opposition fighters from several conservative and hard-line Islamic groups, in-

cluding the al-Qaida-affiliated Nusra Front, launched their assault on the northern stretches of Latakia province along the Turkish frontier March 21. So far, they have seized a border crossing, several villages and the predominantly Armenian-Christian town of Kassab.

They've also gained control of an outlet to the sea for the first time since Syria's uprising began three years ago.

Their push for the area from which Assad's family hails from appeared to have caught Damascus off guard. Government forces, backed by Lebanese Hezbollah fighters, have recently triumphed against the opposition along the border area with Lebanon, ousting rebels from their border strongholds inside Syria and cutting off supply routes from the neighboring country. □



This photo posted on the official Facebook page of the Syrian Presidency, shows Syrian President Bashar Assad talking with soldiers with during Syrian Arab Army day in Darya, Syria. Syrian government forces backed by militia fighters and warplanes pounded rebel units in Latakia province on Monday in a desperate effort to regain control of towns and villages in President Bashar Assad's ancestral homeland recently lost to an opposition offensive.

(AP Photo/Syrian Presidency via Facebook, File)

Pakistan's former ruler pleads not guilty to treason

SALMAN MASOOD

© 2014 New York Times

ISLAMABAD - Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's former military ruler, pleaded not guilty to treason charges Monday after being formally indicted by a special court here, according to lawyers in the case.

The indictment was a turning point for Pakistan, where the military has long dominated the civilian leadership and no military ruler has ever been tried for abuse of power.

But the court proceedings Monday might also have a silver lining for Musharraf,

who requested that the special court panel allow him to travel abroad to seek medical treatment. The three-member panel did not reject his request outright, suggesting that Musharraf could approach the government about having his name removed from the list of people barred from leaving the country.

Muhammad Farogh Naseem, a lawyer for Musharraf, said the former leader had already asked the Interior Ministry for permission to leave. Earlier, Naseem urged the court to al-

low Musharraf to travel to the United Arab Emirates to visit his ailing mother in the hospital, and also to be allowed to go to the United States for his own treatment.

Publicly, government officials dismissed the idea that Musharraf would be allowed to travel.

But for months there has been speculation that Musharraf might eventually be allowed to leave the country as a way to defuse a case that could bring the military into conflict with the judiciary and the civilian government of Prime

Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif told the Pakistani Parliament on Monday that the government could arrange an air ambulance to ferry Musharraf's ailing mother to Pakistan.

Asif also said that the country's military and civilian leadership were "on the same page."

During the court proceedings, Musharraf stood defiantly as charges were read out, then pleaded not guilty.

"I fought two wars for the country," he told the court

during an impassioned speech that lasted just under half an hour.

Musharraf is accused of subverting Pakistan's Constitution in 2007, when he imposed emergency rule and fired high-ranking judicial officials in an attempt to maintain his grip on power. He resigned under threat of impeachment in 2008 and left the country. He returned to Pakistan in March 2013 to revive his political career but instead found himself ensnared in a phalanx of court cases stemming from his time in power. □

Scandal hits South Africa's Zuma

CHRIS TORCHIA
Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — A scandal surrounding more than \$20 million in state spending on the South African president's private home has ignited a debate about moral leadership and alleged corruption ahead of May elections, even prompting satirical songs based on smash hits such as "Gangnam Style."

The uproar comes at a pivotal time for President Jacob Zuma and his ruling African National Congress party, the former anti-apartheid movement that has dominated South African politics since the end of white racist rule two decades ago. Opposition parties hope to make inroads against the electoral front runner by driving a wedge between ANC supporters and the president, whose tenure has been hit by allegations of state graft.

President Jacob Zuma said government security officials controlled the project at his home and that efforts by the political opposition to bring criminal charges against him for alleged misuse of state money will fail, South Africa media reported Monday.

"There is no case," The New Age newspaper quoted Zuma as saying at a campaign stop near opposition-held Cape Town. "They can look for me even under the trees. They are never going to find me because I never did anything wrong."

On March 19, South Africa's state watchdog agency released a report concluding that Zuma inappropriately benefited from state funding and should pay back some money for the alleged security upgrades at the president's rural Nkandla residence. Some construction had nothing to do with security, including an amphitheater, a visitors' center, a chicken run and an area for cattle, according to the report.

Many South Africans are incensed by the building of a swimming pool at Nkandla that was described by project officials as a "fire pool," or a reservoir to be used to douse any blaze. They are delighted, in turn, by a YouTube parody of the catchy "Gangnam Style" song by South Korea's Psy.

"Nkandla Style" doesn't feature any trademark dance, just a revolving view of a pile of coins and cartoons of a pulsating transistor radio.

The lyrics include, "If you're number one, you get to drive the gravy train," and "Yes I'm swimming in your money but I don't know, I don't know, skinny dipping with all my honeys, cool in the pool, my fire pool."

Another spoof came from South African DJ Gareth Cliff, who riffs off American rapper Jay Z's "Empire State of Mind" with a chorus that goes, "Secret jungle where dreams are made of/There's nothing you can't do/Now you're in Nkandla."

The scandal follows the suspension last year of some security officials after a chartered plane carrying 200 guests from India to a lavish family wedding was allowed to land at a South African air force base. Critics said it was an example of inappropriate links between big business and top government ranks.

The executive committee of the ruling party, which includes Zuma, said Monday that it was committed to accountability and it had noted the watchdog report on the president's home. There are "processes that need to be given a chance," including a report from Zuma as well as a separate state probe, it said.

Some prominent figures in the African National Congress, however, have lamented the Nkandla spending in a country with a deep divide between rich and poor. Last week, Business Day newspaper published a column by Pallo Jordan, a former Cabinet minister who criticized ministers in charge of the project and said Zuma bore "moral responsibility." □

Israeli court convicts Olmert of bribery

JOSEF FEDERMAN
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — An Israeli court on Monday convicted ex-Prime Minister Ehud Olmert in a high-profile bribery case, crushing his hopes for a political comeback and setting the stage for him to become the first Israeli premier to go to prison.

The verdict capped a four-decade political career that saw Olmert transform himself from a sharp-tongued backbencher into a global statesman whose push for peace with the Palestinians was cut

earned the developers tax breaks and other benefits. The hilltop development, resembling a large fortress, is a frequent target of criticism because of its hulking appearance.

Olmert was charged for acts committed while he was mayor of Jerusalem and minister of industry and trade, years before he became prime minister. He was accused of taking bribes to push the project forward.

Olmert rejected all allegations of wrongdoing, and tried to portray a key witness, the late businessman

rarely stuck.

Olmert, 68, faces up to seven years in prison. And under Israeli law, he would have to wait at least seven more years after serving his sentence to run for office. Even if he somehow wins an appeal, he has become so tainted that a comeback is virtually impossible, said Tamir Sheafer, a professor of political science at Jerusalem's Hebrew University. "The ruling is so damaging politically that even if he is somehow exonerated, his career is over," he said. "He had to come out as pure as snow to carry on."



Former Israel Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, center, arrives to the District Court to attend his hearing for a corruption case, in Tel Aviv, Israel, Monday, March 31, 2014. The court handed down the verdict in the wide-ranging Jerusalem real estate scandal case related to Olmert's activities before becoming prime minister in 2006. A total of 13 government officials, developers and other businesspeople were charged in three separate schemes. (AP Photo/Oliver Weiken, Pool)

short by his legal troubles. "It's a sad day for my country," President Shimon Peres, a Nobel peace laureate, said during an official visit to Austria.

Olmert was among 13 government officials, developers and businesspeople charged in three separate schemes related to a housing development in Jerusalem. The Israeli media described the case as the largest corruption scandal ever exposed in Israel.

According to the original 2012 indictment, millions of dollars illegally changed hands to promote a series of real estate projects, including the "Holyland" housing development, which required a radical change in zoning laws and

Shmuel Dechner, as unreliable.

But in a stinging rebuke, Judge David Rozen dismissed Olmert's version. He "tried to get the court to tarnish (the name) of the state witness, at the price of telling lies in his testimony in court," Rozen wrote in his decision.

Olmert's aides said an appeal was likely. "We will study the case closely, and this is probably not the end," said Amir Dan, an Olmert confidant.

Sentencing is set for April 28. Legal experts said the conviction would almost certainly entail prison time — all but ending a long political career that has repeatedly been dogged by corruption allegations that, until Monday, had

Olmert has already faced a trial on separate charges of accepting illicit funds from an American supporter and double-billing Jewish groups for trips abroad. He was cleared in 2012 of the most serious charges but convicted on a lesser count of breach of trust for steering jobs and contracts to clients of business partners and got a suspended one-year sentence. That verdict was seen as a moral victory, and Olmert had signaled an intention to return to politics after the Holyland case was resolved. Olmert had been seen as one of the few politicians capable of mounting a challenge as a centrist alternative to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. □

Low-cost Dominican surgeries spark warnings by US

BEN FOX

EZEQUIEL LOPEZ

Associated Press

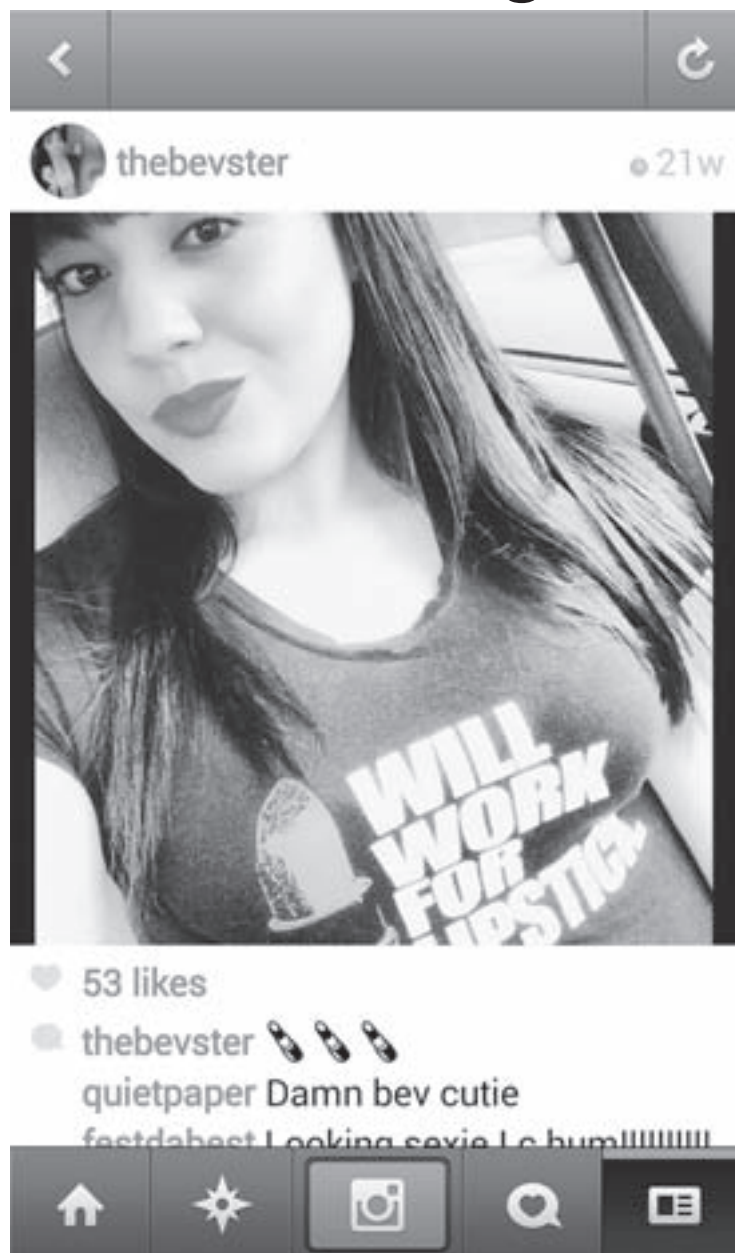
SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — Beverly Brignoni was a young

New Yorker seeking a less expensive way to enhance her appearance and she did what many other people are now doing: travel to the Dominican Republic for cosmetic surgery.

It went horribly wrong. The 28-year-old died Feb. 20 from what the doctor told her family was a massive pulmonary embolism while getting a tummy tuck and liposuction at a clinic in the Dominican capital recommended by friends. Family members have serious questions about her death and want local authorities to investigate.

"We want to know exactly what happened," said Bernadette Lamboy, Brignoni's godmother. "We want to know if there was negligence."

The district attorney's office for Santo Domingo says it has not yet begun an investigation because it has not received a formal complaint from Brignoni's relatives. Family members say they plan to make one. Shortly after Brignoni's death, the Health Ministry inspected the Vista del Jardín Medical Center where she was treated and ordered the operating room temporarily closed, citing the presence of bacteria and violations of bio-



This undated photo, courtesy of the Brignoni family and posted to the Instagram account belonging to Beverly Brignoni, shows a selfie she took at an unknown location. Brignoni was a young New Yorker seeking a less expensive way to enhance her appearance and she did what many other people are now doing: travel to the Dominican Republic for cosmetic surgery. It went horribly wrong. The 28-year-old died Feb. 20, 2014 from what the doctor told her family was a massive pulmonary embolism while getting a tummy tuck and liposuction at a clinic in the Dominican capital recommended by friends. Family members have serious questions about her death and want local authorities to investigate.

(AP Photo/Courtesy of Brignoni Family)

sanitary regulations. The doctor who performed the procedure and the clinic have not responded to requests for comment.

Brignoni's death is unusual, but it is not isolated. Concerns about the booming cosmetic surgery business in the Dominican Republic are enough of an issue that the State Department has posted a warning on its page for travel to that country, noting that in several cases U.S. citizens have suffered serious complications or died.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control issued an alert March 7 after health authorities in the United States reported that at least 19 women in five states had developed serious mycobacterial wound infections over the previous 12 months following cosmetic procedures in the Dominican Republic such as liposuction, tummy tucks and breast implants. There were no reported deaths in those cases, but treatment for these types of infections, which have been caused in the past by contaminated medical equipment, tend to involve long courses of antibiotics and can require new surgery to remove infected tissue and drain fluid, said Dr. Douglas Esposito, a CDC medical officer.

"Some of these patients end up going through one or more surgeries and various travels through the

medical system," Esposito said. "They take a long time typically to get better."

The Dominican Republic, like countries such as Mexico, Costa Rica and Thailand, has promoted itself as a destination for medical tourism, so-called because people will often tack on a few days at a resort after undergoing surgery. The main allure is much lower costs along with the promise that conditions will be on par with what a patient would encounter at home.

In 2013, there were more than 1,000 cosmetic procedures performed in the Dominican Republic, 60 percent of them on foreigners, according to the country's Plastic Surgery Society.

The Internet is flooded with advertisements and testimonials from people who say they have had successful procedures in the Dominican Republic, and an industry of "recovery houses" has sprung up to serve clients, along with promoters who canvass for clients in the United States. The price is often about a third of the cost in the United States.

In 2009, Dominican authorities charged Dr. Johan Tapia Bueno with illegally practicing plastic surgery at his apartment after several women, including a local television personality, accused him of malpractice that left them with infections. Awaiting trial, he has pleaded innocent to charges that include fraud.

Juan Linares, a lawyer hired by Brignoni's boyfriend, said he is still awaiting an autopsy report.

Because she arrived in the country late at night on a delayed flight and was on the operating table early the next morning, a main concern is whether she received an adequate medical evaluation before the procedure. Graham, the Florida surgeon, said sitting on a plane for several hours can cause blood to stagnate in the legs and increase the risk of an embolism. □

Another Mexican vigilante leader accused of murder

MARK STEVENSON

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Authorities announced Monday they have arrested another leader of the vigilante "self-defense" forces in western Mexico and accused him of participating in the killing of a rival, the second such arrest in less than a month. The arrests come amid a broadening government crackdown on the vigilantes, who took up arms a year ago to fight the Knights Templar drug cartel. The groups became popular in many towns because they were able to kick out the car-

tel, whose gunmen had demanded extortion payments from local residents, farmers and businesses.

But the vigilantes have brought their own form of lawlessness to largely agricultural Michoacan state, with rivalries, alleged thefts and possible links to a rival drug gang based in the neighboring state of Jalisco. The federal government envoy to Michoacan, Alfredo Castillo, said at a news conference Monday that the leader of the vigilante group in the town of Yurecuaro, Enrique Hernandez Salcedo, had been arrested for illegal

weapons possession. Castillo said prosecutors were also planning to charge him with ordering the killing of the mayor of the nearby town of Tanhuato, Gustavo Garibay. Castillo alleged Hernandez Salcedo organized the March 22 killing of the mayor because Garibay "was opposed to the presence of the self-defense forces in the town of Tanhuato."

He said authorities had previously detained 14 members of the Yurecuaro vigilante group under Hernandez Salcedo's command. Five of those, including one who was lat-

er found dead, allegedly participated in the killing of Garibay, waiting for the mayor outside his house and attacking him as he emerged.

Some of them implicated their leader in the crime, Castillo said.

The town of Tanhuato was apparently strategic because it lies near Michoacan's border with Jalisco. Castillo said gangs would often kill people in Michoacan and take their bodies to Jalisco for burial in clandestine graves, though he did not say whether the vigilantes had been involved in those killings. □



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ORANJESTAD - That Aruba has many local musical talents is known under the public, especially during carnival season when all these artists are featured on the giant bandwagons. But what about featuring local musicians in a collaboration album? And providing them a proper platform such as our local theatre?

That is what Arubian Soul is all about. Tuesday the 1st of April, Cas di Cultura will

host the first ever Arubian Soul concert which will showcase the artists that have worked on the like-named album produced with the financial support of Unoca. The public attending can enjoy sweet Tumba music. Jazz, Bachata, Salsa and even Pop. The goal of this album and show is to promote Aruban music as a form a World Music.

Famous local talents such as Michelangelo Kool-



man (singer), known for his hit song at the moment "Mundo ta un milager" Martin Buitenweg who has done most of the guitar arrangements on the album,

Miguel Genser, who is not only famous for his vocal and songwriting skills but he is also the star of the current hit movie 'Abo So' playing in local theatres

this week, are just a few of these talents performing this night.

Other musicians featured are Ron Martis performing the song 'mi kier sa' Jelitza Croes featured in the Tumba rythmed song 'Mihor nos separa', Chantal Quandt featured in the song 'Un Bon Muhe' and Ruthjean Landaeta Helder and her husband Rajiv Landaeta will be performing together in the songs "Awe te cos" and the Antillean Waltz "Aruba ta mi cas". Tickets for this fabulous Arubian Soul night are available at Cas Di Cultura Date and Time: Tuesday the 1st of April, 8:00-10:00pm. The album is available on iTunes, at Cas di Cultura on the day of the show, at the 'Waf' in front of Royal Plaza, Unoca and Hopi Bon Grill. □



Honoring at Marriot Ocean Club!



PALM BEACH - Recently, Ms. Marouska Heyliger honored William and Peg Bauer from Maine as Goodwill

Ambassadors, and Bob and Gloria Lorenz from Illinois as Distinguished Visitors. The certificates were

presented in the name of the Aruba Tourism Authority, commemorating their 20th and 10th consecutive



visits to the island, at the Marriott Ocean Club. In the photos, all the honorees are seen together with Ma-

rouska Heyliger from ATA and General Manager of the Marriott Ocean Club Erwin Noguera. □

Brad and Dawn Wegard honored at the Marriott Surf Club

PALM BEACH - Mr. and Mrs. Brad and Dawn Wegard were recently honored as Distinguished Visitors on the occasion of their 10th con-

secutive visit to Aruba. Ms. Marouska Heyliger representing the Aruba Tourism Authority conducted the ceremony which was held

at the Marriott Surf Club. According to the couple, they love the friendly people and the 'home away from home' feeling.



The honorees are seen in the photos together with Jenny Boekhoudt and Joop Bangma, General

Manager from Marriott Surf Club, and Marouska Heyliger from ATA. □

Beauty On The Beach

Diana and Anabela

Sisters Diana and Anabela are in Aruba with their parents. It is their first time in Aruba and they love it.

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Waiter and the Donkey Sanctuary can use your help!

BRINGAMOS! - We would like to introduce Waiter to you, one of the donkeys that has found a home at the Aruba Donkey Sanctuary. Named after the Kellner family (kelner in Dutch translates into waiter), who was instrumental in catching this donkey. Unfortunately this kind animal has a broken leg and the future will tell whether he can still be operated. When a donkey has had a broken leg for too long, the bone grows back crookedly. And because nobody knows how long Waiter has been limping along before coming to the Sanctuary, x-rays will tell us what needs to be done to be able to give this donkey a good life within a protected environment. Until then the volunteers give him extra attention and treats and he is lapping it up! This beautiful donkey has been provided with a chip, just like all the other

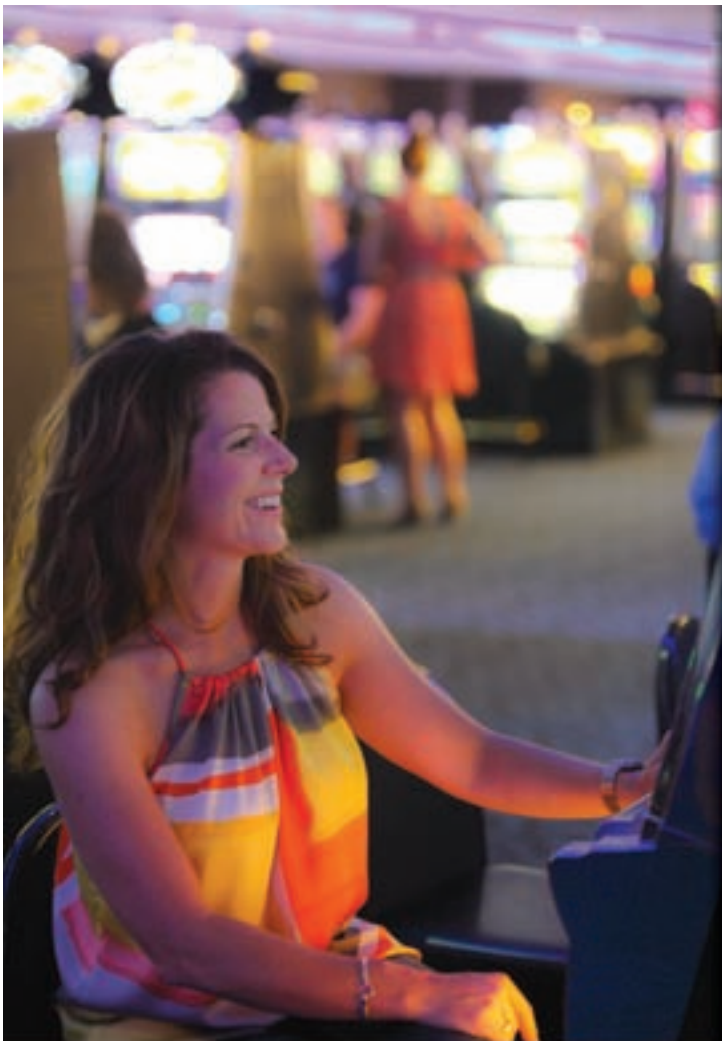
donkeys. On the chip is information about the donkey and its medical history. The donkeys at the sanctuary have a lot of friends with whom they can play all day long. And they love living there: they are well-cared for, they are fed and watered and when they are sick the vet is called. Yes, they are expensive customers for the sanctuary. The volunteers are trying to cover the various costs with all kinds of activities and the sale of great donkey memorabilia in the shop. Fortunately, there are also visitors who wish to adopt a donkey, who buy something at the donkey shop or who make a donation. Thus they help support us. Everyone is welcome to visit the sanctuary, which has opening hours from 9 am until 4 pm and in the weekend from 10 am until 3. Entry is free of charge and one can enjoy a soft



drink, a cup of coffee or a refreshing ice cream. The volunteers of the sanctuary are hoping that somebody will adopt this friendly, lovely donkey. Of course the donkey will keep on living at the sanctuary; you only need to pay AWG. 30,- per

month for the donkey's keep. With this amount you help support the sanctuary as well as your own donkey. And you will receive a beautiful certificate and a super T-shirt and your name and photo will be posted on our website. So please call the sanctuary

at 593-2933; you can also register via the website www.arubandonkey.org or donate money on bank account number 40.03.025 at the Aruba Bank! Just do it! Would you like to follow the donkeys on Facebook: surf to Donkey Sanctuary Aruba please. ☐



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and much more. Our desks are located at Casa del Mar (pool deck), Westin Hotel lower lobby, Westin activity center (pool deck), Playa Linda resort next to the juice bar, Holiday Inn Desk and at the Concierge



& Pelican Pier desk located between Holiday Inn hotel & Playa Linda Resort.

Pelican Nest Restaurant offers an impressive selection of fresh seafood (caught daily by our own fleet), International dishes and a relaxing atmosphere. Open

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APNewsBreak: Dodgers set payroll record at \$234M

RONALD BLUM

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Los Angeles Dodgers set a record with an opening-day payroll of \$234 million Sunday, according to a study of big league contracts by The Associated Press.

The New York Yankees were a distant second at \$199 million, ending their streak of six straight openers above the \$200 million mark. The Yankees had topped the opening-day salary list for 15 straight years and had set the previous mark of \$230 million last season.

The Dodgers spent more than five times the total of the Houston Astros, who at \$45 million were last for the second straight year but vastly above their \$27 million outlay on opening day last season. Miami, at \$47 million, repeated in 29th place. "I think we've all noticed," San Francisco manager Bruce Bochy said of the Dodgers' spending splurge. "We can't get caught into it. I've always preached this to the players: There's no point in looking at what other clubs are doing or who they have, their assets, this and that. Dodgers pitcher Zack Greinke ended Alex Rodriguez's 13-year streak as the highest-paid player, earning \$28 million, including a prorated share of his signing bonus. He's followed by Philadelphia's Ryan Howard and Cliff Lee at \$25 million each, the Yankees' CC Sabathia at \$24.3 million, and Seattle's Robinson Cano and Texas' Prince Fielder at \$24 million apiece.

Continued Next Page



Washington Nationals starting pitcher Stephen Strasburg throws in the first inning of a baseball game against the New York Mets on opening day at Citi Field, Monday, March 31, 2014, in New York.
Associated Press

MLB heats up with full slate of openers

NL Capsules

Brewers beat Braves 2-0 in Braun's 1st game back

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Brewers star Ryan Braun drew a standing ovation in his return from a drug suspension, then was ruled out in the first call overturned under baseball's expanded replay system as Milwaukee beat the Atlanta Braves 2-0 on Monday in a season opener.

Braun went 1 for 4 and stole a base in the fourth inning that helped set up a two-run double by Aramis Ramirez.

A smattering of boos during Braun's first at-bat was easily drowned out by the overwhelming applause. The former MVP was suspended for the final 65 games last year in the Biogenesis doping scandal.

Later, Braun had his infield single to lead off the sixth overturned to out after the call was challenged by Braves manager Fredi Gonzalez under Major League Baseball's new replay format.

The review took 58 seconds.

Yovani Gallardo (1-0) tossed six shutout innings for the win.

Making his first opening day start, Julio Teheran (0-1) allowed two runs and seven hits in six innings.

CARDINALS 1, REDS 0

CINCINNATI (AP) — Yadier

Molina's homer broke a seventh-inning tie, leading St. Louis Cardinals to a victory over the Reds.

Adam Wainwright (1-0) used his refined sinker to finally get the best of the Reds, who have hit him like no other team. Wainwright allowed three hits in seven innings, fanning nine.

St. Louis escaped a threat in the eighth. Trevor Rosenthal retired all three batters in the ninth, finishing a three-hitter for the defending National League champions. Bryan Price lost his managing debut with Cincinnati, which opened the season with eight players on the disabled list, its most since 2007.

Johnny Cueto (0-1) allowed three hits in seven innings.

PIRATES 1, CUBS 0, 10 INNINGS

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Neil Walker homered off Carlos Villanueva leading off the 10th inning as the Pirates benefited from an overturned to call to beat the Cubs 1-0 on opening day.

Reliever Bryan Morris (1-0) won with the help of an overturned pickoff call in the top of the 10th under Major League Baseball's new replay system. Starter Francisco Liriano and four relievers combined for 11 strikeouts.



Umpire Ted Barrett (65) listens to a headset during instant replay in the sixth inning of an Opening day baseball game between the Atlanta Braves and Milwaukee Brewers Monday, March 31, 2014, in Milwaukee. Atlanta got a reversal of a call against the Milwaukee Brewers Ryan Braun at first base.

Associated Press

Emilio Bonifacio went 4 for 5 for Chicago, but the Cubs were 0 for 11 with runners in scoring position and wasted a fine start by Jeff Samardzija, who scattered five hits over seven innings.

NATIONALS 9, METS 7, 10 INNINGS

NEW YORK (AP) — Anthony Rendon hit a three-run homer in the 10th inning and drove in a career-high four runs, twice rallying the Nationals against the Mets'

suspect bullpen for an opening-day victory.

Denard Span hit a tying double with two outs in the ninth off closer Bobby Parnell, and Ian Desmond put the Nationals in front for the first time with a sacrifice fly in the 10th. Rendon connected two batters later against former Washington pitcher John Lannan, securing a win for Matt Williams in his first game as a major league manager.

Stephen Strasburg struck out 10 over six innings in his third straight opening-day start.

Juan Lagares and Andrew Brown both homered for New York after they were surprise additions to the lineup. Aaron Barrett (1-0) struck out two in a perfect inning to win his major league debut.

Jeury Familia (0-1) took the loss, hurt by catcher Travis d'Arnaud's passed ball. □



In this Monday, Feb. 10, 2014 file photo, Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Zack Greinke throws during spring training baseball practice in Glendale, Ariz.

Associated Press

Continued from page 17

The average salary was \$3.95 million for the 853

players on opening-day rosters and disabled lists, plus two players serving suspensions who earn part

of their salaries. That was up 8.2 percent from last year's opening average of \$3.65 million, the steepest increase since 2006. More than half the players — 486 — earn \$1 million or more.

And that doesn't even include two big-money deals in the lead-up to Sunday night's North American opener between the Dodgers and San Diego: In a pair of agreements Friday, Detroit's Miguel Cabrera earned a \$292 million, 10-year contract that adds eight additional seasons and \$248 million to his existing deal, and young Los Angeles Angels star Mike Trout reached a \$144.5 million, six-year agreement

that starts in 2015. MLB's median salary, the point where an equal number earn above and below, is \$1,475,000 — up from \$1,262,500 at the start of last season.

Average and median salaries decline over the course of the season as veterans are released and replaced by younger players making closer to the minimum, which is \$500,000 this year. The players' association calculated last season's final average at \$3.39 million, about \$60,000 more than Major League Baseball's figure.

The AP's figures include salaries and prorated shares of signing bonuses

and other guaranteed income for players on active rosters, disabled lists and the restricted list. For some players, parts of deferred money are discounted to reflect current values.

Payroll figures factor in adjustments for cash transactions in trades, signing bonuses that are the responsibility of the club agreeing to the contract, option buyouts and termination pay for released players.

Figures do not include players who started the season in the minor leagues, such as Atlanta pitcher Ervin Santana (\$14.1 million) and Dodgers second baseman Alex Guerrero (\$6.5 million). □

AL Capsules

Phillies open with 14-10 victory at Rangers

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Jimmy Rollins hit a grand slam and pinch-hitter John Mayberry Jr. had a two-run double that put the Philadelphia ahead to stay in a wild opening 14-10 victory over the Texas Rangers on Monday.

Marlon Byrd and Cody Asche also homered for the Phillies, who scored their most runs in an opener since beating the Boston Beaneaters 19-17 in 1900.

Cliff Lee (1-0) matched his career high by allowing eight runs and struck out only one, but the left-hander made it through five innings.

Tanner Scheppers, the first pitcher since Fernando Valenzuela for the 1981 Los Angeles Dodgers in 1981 to make his first big league start on opening day, gave up seven runs over four innings, including the slam by Rollins that made it 6-0 in the second. Mayberry had his tiebreaking hit in the fifth off Pedro Figueroa (0-1) for a 9-7 lead.

ORIOLES 2, RED SOX 1

BALTIMORE (AP) — Nelson Cruz celebrated his Baltimore debut by hitting a tiebreaking homer in the seventh off Jon Lester (0-1), sending World Series champion Boston to an opening loss.

Signed as a free agent in February, Cruz hit 27 homers last year with Texas during a season marred by a 50-game suspension stemming from an investigation of performance-enhancing drugs.

After missing two seasons recovering from knee surgery, Boston center fielder Grady Sizemore marked his return from a 922-day absence with a second-inning single for his first hit since September 2011. The three-time All-Star for Cleveland later hit his first home run since July 15, 2011, also at Camden Yards.

Zach Britton (1-0) pitched two scoreless innings, and Tommy Hunter worked the ninth for his first save.

TIGERS 4, ROYALS 3

DETROIT (AP) — Alex Gonzalez drove in the winning run in his Detroit debut, lining a single to left off Greg Holland in the ninth.

Acquired by Detroit in late March following an injury to shortstop Jose Iglesias, Gonzalez made a costly error in Kansas City's three-run fourth but made up for that with a tying triple in the seventh. He then singled with men on first and third in the ninth, giving Brad Ausmus a win in his first game since replacing Jim Leyland as the Tigers' manager.



Philadelphia Phillies' Jimmy Rollins hits a grand slam home run against the Texas Rangers during the second inning of an opening day baseball game at Globe Life Park, Monday, March 31, 2014, in Arlington, Texas.

Associated Press

Joe Nathan (1-0) pitched a scoreless ninth in his first appearance for the Tigers. Wade Davis (0-1) allowed a one-out walk to Alex Avila and a single to Nick Castellanos in the ninth.

Holland — who had 47 saves in 50 chances last year — couldn't escape the jam as the Royals lost their sixth straight opener.

RAYS 9, BLUE JAYS 2

ST. PETERSBURG, Florida (AP) — David Price (1-0) allowed two runs and six hits over 7 1-3 innings to beat

R.A. Dickey in a matchup of 2012 Cy Young pitching award winners.

Matt Joyce drove in three runs for the Rays with a sacrifice fly and two-run double off Dickey (0-1), who yielded six two-out runs in five innings.

Toronto's Jose Reyes left the lineup after his first at-bat because of a tight left hamstring.

WHITE SOX 5, TWINS 3

CHICAGO (AP) — Alejandro De Aza hit two homers, and Jose Abreu had two

hits in his major league debut.

Chicago's Paul Konerko got a loud ovation before what was likely his final opener, although he wasn't in the lineup. The White Sox are coming off a 63-99 season, their poorest record since 1970.

Chris Sale (1-0) allowed three runs and five hits in 7 1-3 innings with eight strikeouts to beat Ricky Nolasco (0-1), who gave up five runs and 10 hits in six innings in his Twins debut. □

Smith, Denorfia lift Padres to 3-1 win over Dodgers

BERNIE WILSON
AP Sports Writer

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Seth Smith hit a tying homer leading off the eighth and Chris Denorfia singled home two runs to give the San Diego Padres a 3-1 victory against the rival Los Angeles Dodgers in baseball's North American opener Sunday night.

Smith's first hit with the Padres came on a 2-0 pitch from Brian Wilson, who started the eighth after Hyun-Jin Ryu threw seven scoreless innings. It was his seventh career pinch-hit

homer. He was acquired in an offseason trade with Oakland for reliever Luke Gregerson.

Wilson (0-1) walked pinch-hitter Yasmani Grandal, who advanced when the veteran reliever couldn't handle Everth Cabrera's bunt for an error. Grandal stole third and Cabrera took second on indifference before Denorfia hit a bouncer up the middle to bring them both in.

Dale Thayer (1-0) pitched a perfect eighth for the win. Huston Street finished for

the save.

The defending NL West champion Dodgers had started the regular season with a two-game sweep of the Arizona Diamondbacks in Sydney, Australia.

Ryu got the start after reigning NL Cy Young Award winner Clayton Kershaw was scratched due to a swollen back muscle and then placed on the 15-day disabled list for the first time in his seven-year career.

In a scheduling quirk, the left-hander started consecutive regular-season games. He made his sea-



San Diego Padres' Everth Cabrera slides past Los Angeles Dodgers catcher A.J. Ellis while scoring in the eighth inning of the opening game of Major League baseball in the United States Sunday, March 30, 2014, in San Diego.

Associated Press

son debut a week earlier, when the Dodgers beat the Diamondbacks in their second game in Sydney. Ryu retired 16 in a row from

the second inning until one out in the seventh. He then walked rookie Tommy Medica, who was then erased in a 3-6-3 double play. □

Pierce, Nets win 13th straight at home, top Wolves

The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — NEW YORK (AP) — Paul Pierce scored 22 points as the Brooklyn Nets moved to the brink of a playoff spot by beating the Minnesota Timberwolves 114-99 on Sunday for their club record-equaling 13th straight home victory.

Pierce scored 16 in the first quarter, two nights after putting up 17 in the period, and didn't miss a shot in either. Joe Johnson added 19 points for the Nets, who would clinch a playoff spot if the New York Knicks lost to Golden State later Sunday.

Brooklyn equaled the longest home winning streak in the NBA this season and the best in the history of the franchise.

Corey Brewer and Kevin Martin each scored 21 for the Timberwolves, who had won two in row and were coming off the highest-scoring game in the NBA this season, when they scored a franchise-record 143 points in a rout of the Lakers on Friday.

CAVALIERS 90, PACERS 76 CLEVELAND (AP) — Dion Waiters scored 19 points and Luol Deng added 15 as the Cleveland Cavaliers kept their playoff push going with a 90-76 win over



Brooklyn Nets' Paul Pierce dunks the ball during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Minnesota Timberwolves Sunday, March 30, 2014, at Barclay's Center in New York.

Associated Press

the Indiana Pacers, who are losing their grip on the No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference.

Tristan Thompson had 16 rebounds as the Cavs snapped a nine-game losing streak against Indiana. Cleveland came in three games behind slumping,

idle Atlanta for the conference's final playoff spot. With seven games left — six against teams with losing records — the Cavs still have a chance.

The Pacers, meanwhile, are falling apart. They lost their fifth straight road game and now lead Miami by

one game for the East's top record and home-court advantage.

Paul George scored 15 and David West 14 for Indiana, which fell behind by 21 in the fourth quarter.

THUNDER 116, JAZZ 96

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Kevin Durant had 31 points and nine assists to help the Oklahoma City Thunder defeat the Utah Jazz.

Durant scored at least 25 points for the 38th consecutive game, the longest streak since Michael Jordan did it in 40 straight games for the Chicago Bulls during the 1986-87 season.

Russell Westbrook scored 19 points, Serge Ibaka had 17 points and Caron Butler added 15 for the Thunder, who have won six of seven. Oklahoma City shot 55 percent from the field and made 11 of 18 3-pointers and 23 of 26 free throws.

Enes Kanter had 18 points and 12 rebounds for the Jazz, who have lost four in a row.

RAPTORS 98, MAGIC 93

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — DeMar DeRozan had 28 points, Jonas Valanciunas added 20 points and nine rebounds, and the Toronto Raptors escaped with a victory over the Orlando Magic.

Trailing 96-93 with 8.9 seconds to play, the Magic had the ball and an opportunity to tie the game. But coming out of a timeout they failed to inbound the ball, turning it over on a 5-second violation. DeRozan was fouled and hit a pair of free throws to provide the final margin.

The win was the Raptors' third in a row and seventh straight over the Magic. Toronto swept the season series 3-0.

Nik Vucevic led the Magic with 22 points and 10 rebounds.

BULLS 107, CELTICS 102

BOSTON (AP) — D.J. Augustin scored 15 of his career-high 33 points in the fourth quarter, helping the Chicago Bulls held off the slumping Boston Celtics.

Augustin was perfect from the foul line on 10 attempts and was 10-for-14 from the floor, including a 3-pointer late in the period to break a 96-all tie and give Chicago the lead for good. He followed that with six straight free throws to help the Bulls close out the Celtics.

Joakim Noah finished with 13 points, 13 assists and eight rebounds for the Bulls, who will try for a three-game season sweep against the Celtics on Monday night in Chicago. □



In this April 25, 2013 photo, running shoes and other items adorn a makeshift memorial near the Boston Marathon finish line in Boston's Copley Square.

Associated Press

PAIGE SUTHERLAND, Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Mourners began leaving thousands of items at a makeshift memorial near the finish line of the Boston Marathon

to honor the victims of the twin bombings there last April.

Some left teddy bears, signs and marathon bibs while others draped running sneakers to commem-

Boston bombing exhibit includes shoes, runner bibs

orate the three people killed and more than 260 injured during the April 15 attacks. A cross was set up for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology police officer fatally shot three days later amid a search for the bombing suspects.

To mark the anniversary of the bombings, the material will be curated into an exhibit called "Dear Boston: Messages from the Marathon Memorial." It will be hosted by the Boston Public Library from April 7 to May 11. Among the numerous heartfelt messages left at Copley Square was one from a Sandy Hook

mother that reads, "We understand. Sending love and support." Other notes urged resilience: "Don't let this stop you. Stay Boston Strong" and "We will run again."

One colorful sign had more than 10 towns in Massachusetts forming the shape of a heart, saying "Stands with Boston!!!" underneath. And multiple messages of "I love my city" and "Boston Strong" memorabilia were scattered throughout the square.

Messages were sent from across the world, including Israel, South Korea, Turkey and Venezuela.

But the long-term home for these artifacts is still in flux. Until then, any paper tributes will be held in the Boston archives and the other artifacts will be kept in storage.

An online catalog called "Our Marathon" is hosted by Northeastern University and features 18,000 cards addressed to the mayor's office. Photos of other objects that can't be scanned will also be included. The city has also lent out a few of the items for exhibits at the Cambridge Public Library, Northeastern University and the mayor's office. □

NHL Capsules

Crosby helps Penguins beat Blackhawks 4-1

The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Sidney Crosby scored twice in the final five minutes, helping the Pittsburgh Penguins to a 4-1 victory over the injury-riddled Chicago Blackhawks on Sunday night.

The Blackhawks also lost captain Jonathan Toews to an upper-body injury in the second period.

Toews was hit hard by Penguins defenseman Brooks Orpik and was holding his left arm on the bench before heading down the runway.

James Neal and Lee Stempniak also scored for the Penguins, who won their second straight and snapped a three-game home losing streak. Marc-Andre Fleury made 25 saves in his 36th victory of the season.

Orpik drilled Toews in the corner with 6:30 remaining in the second period while the two went for a loose puck.

It's been a rough stretch for

injuries for the defending Stanley Cup champions, who will be without star forward Patrick Kane for the rest of the regular season due to a lower-body injury. Bryan Bickell is out with an upper-body injury but is expected to return soon.

Sheldon Brookbank scored for the Blackhawks, who have lost three straight in regulation for the first time since February 2012.

BRUINS 4, FLYERS 3

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Patrice Bergeron scored in the second period and also tallied in the shootout, leading Boston to the victory.

The Bruins have won nine straight road games, a single-season club record.

Reilly Smith, the fifth Boston shooter, clinched the victory in the tiebreaker. The Bruins went 15-1-1 in March. Vincent Lecavalier scored twice for the Flyers, including the tying goal with 25 seconds left in regulation. Lecavalier's first goal was



Nashville Predators forward Rich Clune (16) fights with Washington Capitals defenseman Patrick Wey (56) in the first period of an NHL hockey game on Sunday, March 30, 2014, in Nashville, Tenn. Associated Press

the 400th of his career.

Kimmo Timonen scored for Philadelphia, which has lost three of four to remain in third place in the Metropolitan Division.

Andrej Meszaros and Zdeno Chara also scored for

the Bruins.

RED WINGS 3, LIGHTNING 2
DETROIT (AP) — David Legwand had a goal and an assist as Detroit held off Tampa Bay to move into seventh place in the Eastern Conference.

Joakim Andersson and Gustav Nyquist also scored for Detroit, and Jonas Gustavsson stopped 26 shots.

Valtteri Filppula and Sami Salo scored for Tampa Bay and Ben Bishop made 27 saves. □

Hobie Alter, who revolutionized surfing, dies

JOHN ROGERS**Associated Press**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Two words — surfboards and Hobie — were all but synonymous in the early 1960s, when teenagers who saw movies such as "Gidget" and "Beach Party" rushed to the shores of Southern California to try a mesmerizing new water sport.

The lightweight, maneuverable boards built by a surfer dude known as Hobie carried people into the pastime that for decades had remained all but invisible outside California and Hawaii.

Hobart Laidlaw Alter (it's unlikely many users of his gear knew his last name or even if he had one) toiled in a small beachfront shop in Dana Point, cranking out those boards by the thousands.

Hobie surfboards eventu-

ally became the linchpin of a multimillion-dollar, worldwide empire that, by the time its unassuming namesake died last week, had grown to include catamarans, skateboards, beach wear and more.

Hobie died Saturday at his Palm Desert home after a lengthy battle with cancer. He was 80.

The man who revolutionized surfing with a cheap, lightweight, easily maneuverable board might have stayed out of the limelight for most of his life, but the boards and catamarans he created did not.

"The basic surfboard structure for 90 percent of the surfboards around the world remains the foam core that he developed, and that was 50 years ago," Steve Pezman, publisher of Surfer's Journal and a longtime friend of Hobie,

said Monday.

When Hobie built his first surfboard, about the time he graduated from high school in 1950, the old-fashioned, heavy wooden ones that had limited the sport to the strongest and most determined athletes were beginning to give way to lighter balsa wood boards. But balsa wood was hard to come by.

A few years after Hobie moved his board-building operation out of his parents Laguna Beach garage in 1954, he and his friend Gordon "Grubby" Clark decided they could build a better board using a polyurethane foam core.

It took a year of trial and error, but they prevailed: The result was a board that was easy to shape, so light a child could carry it to the ocean, and so maneuverable a good surfer could



In this undated photo provided Monday, March 31, 2014, by Hobie Designs, shows design innovator Hobart "Hobie" Alter. Associated Press

do all sorts of stunts on it.

Soon Hobie was working with a small staff, producing 250 boards a week and struggling to keep up with demand.

His timing had been fortuitous. "Gidget," the film based on author Frederick Kohner's surfing-obsessed teenage daughter and her goofy friends, had arrived in theaters in 1959, sending millions on a quest to ride the wild surf — preferably on a reasonably priced

surfboard.

Soon the Hobie board, which retailed for a little more than \$100, and its distinctive logo were ubiquitous. He had been a first-rate surfer, competing in Hawaii's Makaha International Surfing Championships in 1958 and 1959, and by the mid-1960s he was living in a beachfront home where he discovered it was impossible to launch a heavy sailboat from anywhere but a marina. □

Studies find new drugs greatly lower cholesterol

MARILYNN MARCHIONE
AP Chief Medical Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) — A

new class of experimental medicines can dramatically lower cholesterol, raising hopes of a fresh option for people who can't tolerate or don't get enough help from Lipitor and other statin drugs that have been used for this for decades.

The first large studies of these drugs were presented Saturday at an American College of Cardiology conference in Washington, and more will follow on Sunday.

Several companies are developing these drugs, which are aimed at 70 million Americans and millions more worldwide who have high LDL or "bad" cholesterol, a major risk for heart disease.

Three studies of Amgen Inc.'s version of these drugs, called evolocumab, found it lowered LDL by 55 to 66 percent from baseline levels compared to others who took a fake drug, and by nearly that much when compared to Merck's Zetia, another cholesterol medication.

As impressive as that is, it's still just part of the picture. Doctors want evidence that the way these drugs lower cholesterol also will lead to fewer heart attacks and deaths, because that proof already exists for statins. New studies are underway to test this, but Amgen said it will seek U.S. government approval for its drug this year based on cholesterol-lowering alone. That was enough to win approval for statins and Zetia, but use of Zetia has declined since 2008, when research showed it failed to help prevent heart attacks even though it cut cholesterol. Hopes are high that the new Amgen drug and others like it will do better. "I would be happy to see it approved" on the cholesterol results alone, said Dr. Hadley Wilson, a cardiologist at Carolinas HealthCare System. "We need additional agents other than statins" to help patients, he said.

Nearly all current chole-

sterol medicines — fibrates, niacin and top-selling statins — are decades old. Statins such as Lipitor, Zocor and Crestor curb cholesterol production. Zetia, which came out about a decade ago, helps block the absorption of cholesterol from the intestine.

The new drugs block PCSK9, a substance that interferes with the liver's ability to remove cholesterol from the blood.

They have big drawbacks,

"We were very, very pleased" about how well patients accepted the shots, and if they offer better results, especially for those with inherited conditions, "people will accept it," said Dr. Michael Koren of Jacksonville Center for Clinical Research in Florida, who helped lead two of the studies.

The three Amgen studies involved about 2,000 patients in all. Doctors tested the drug in people with

a little higher with the experimental drug.

Overall safety "is very, very encouraging," said Dr. Scott Wasserman, Amgen's executive medical director.

Researchers also said:

—Alirocumab, a similar drug being developed by Sanofi SA and Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc., lowered LDL cholesterol by 47 percent vs. 16 percent for Zetia in a study of about 100 people not taking any

gist and spokesman for the American Heart Association.

It may be easier to justify their use in patients with genes that cause high cholesterol at an early age, he said.

A spokeswoman for the federal Food and Drug Administration, Sandy Walsh, suggested that might be the case.

"Although we cannot comment on the likelihood of approval based solely



This 2011 photo provided by Watson Pharmaceuticals Inc. shows bottles of Atorvastatin Calcium tablets, a generic form of Lipitor which is sold under a deal with Pfizer. Associated Press

though. Statins are pills sold as generics for as little as a dime a day. The new drugs are proteins rather than chemicals, and those tend to be very expensive to make. They also must be given as shots every two weeks or once a month. People can give the shots to themselves with a pen-like device. The companies developing the new medicines have not said what they might cost.

high cholesterol not taking other medicines, as a long-term (one-year) treatment in people already taking various medications and in combination with statins and other drugs in people with an inherited cholesterol disorder.

In general, side-effect rates were about the same for evolocumab vs. placebo or Zetia. In some studies, muscle aches, nausea and a few other problems were

other drugs for high cholesterol.

—Bococizumab, from Pfizer Inc., lowered LDL 45 percent to 67 percent, depending on dose, compared to placebo in 354 people with high cholesterol also taking a statin.

"There's great interest" in all of these drugs, but doctors will wait for evidence that they lower heart risks, said Dr. Neil Stone, a Northwestern University cardiolo-

on specific indications or populations," two drugs recently were approved based on cholesterol-lowering for people with inherited conditions, she noted. A decision on approval also will be influenced by how much the drug lowers cholesterol, its effects on other fats in the blood and other heart signs such as inflammation and blood pressure, and its safety, she said. □

BlackBerry wins ruling against iPhone keyboard

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Troubled smartphone maker BlackBerry has won an early round in its legal battle against an iPhone keyboard made by a startup co-founded by "American Idol" host Ryan Seacrest.

A court order bans Seacrest's company, Typo Products LLC, from selling its iPhone keyboard in the U.S. while BlackBerry Ltd. proceeds with a patent infringement case against the product. BlackBerry contends Typo Products ripped off the design from the physical keyboards used for typing on BlackBerry's phones.

U.S. District Judge William Orrick in San Francisco ruled that BlackBerry is likely to prove its infringement claims against Typo Products and would be damaged if the sales of the \$99 iPhone keyboard were allowed to continue.

The ban could be lifted later in the case if Typo Products prevails in its claims that its iPhone keyboard isn't based on any of BlackBerry's patented designs or technology.

"This ruling will help prevent further injury to BlackBerry from Typo's blatant theft of our patented keyboard technology," BlackBerry said in a statement.

Typo Products said it plans to appeal Orrick's ruling. "Typo will continue to make and sell innovative products that busy people can't live without," the Los Angeles company said in a



In this Monday, Sept. 21, 2009, file photo, a BlackBerry Bold, left, and Tour, right are photographed in Mountain View, Calif., Monday, Sept. 21, 2009. Associated Press

statement. In court papers, Typo Products warned that it might go out of business if it was not allowed to keep selling its iPhone keyboard. Seacrest started Typo Products with entrepreneur Laurence Hallier last year. The iPhone keyboard went

on sale in January as an alternative to typing on a touch screen.

The physical keyboards on BlackBerry's phones helped reshape the way that people used mobile devices. But those phones have been waning in pop-

ularity since Apple Inc. released the first iPhone in 2007, threatening BlackBerry's survival. As its losses have mounted, BlackBerry's market value has plummeted from more than \$80 billion in 2008 to less than \$5 billion today.

The Canadian company is trying to bounce back by focusing more on its software than its smartphones under CEO John Chen, who took charge last year. BlackBerry lost \$5.9 billion in its last fiscal year ending March 1. □

U.S. to require rearview cameras in new vehicles

STACY A. ANDERSON

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Transportation Department issued a rule Monday that will require rearview technology in many new vehicles — an effort to reduce deaths and serious injuries caused by backup accidents.

The final rule issued by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration will require new vehicles under 10,000 pounds (4,535 kilograms) and built on-or-after May 1, 2018 to meet the new rear-visibility standards. The rule includes buses and trucks. Motorcycles and trailers are exempt.

The rearview cameras must give drivers a field of vision measuring at least 10 by 20 feet (3 by 6 meters) directly behind the vehicle. The sys-

tem must also meet other requirements including dashboard image size, lighting conditions and display time.

Backup accidents involving light vehicles cause an average of 210 deaths and 15,000 injuries a year, and victims often include children and the elderly, the government said. Children under 5 years old account for 31 percent of the deaths each year, while adults 70 years of age and older represent about 26 percent.

NHTSA said the new rule, required in the Cameron Gulbransen Kids Transportation Safety Act, will save between 13 to 15 lives per year and prevent as many as 1,125 injuries per year. The measure, signed into law in 2008, was named for a 2-year-old Long Island boy

whose pediatrician father backed over him in their driveway in 2002.

The government estimates that a rearview system will cost between \$132 and \$142 per vehicle. It will cost about \$43 to \$45 for vehicles that already have a dashboard display screen, but need upgrades to comply with the rule.

Compliance will be phased in by manufacturers starting in May 2016, before it becomes mandatory two years later.

"Today's decision will save lives and save money for consumers," Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety President Jackie Gillan said in a statement. "Every make and model will be required to meet this new safety standard and every family will benefit." □

Stocks close out a meager first-quarter gain

KEN SWEET

AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — If 2013 was a year where the stock market went straight up, 2014 has started off as a year where the stock market moves sideways.

There was plenty for investors to worry about in the first three months of the year, from tensions between Russia and the West over Ukraine and the winter storms that froze the U.S. economy in January and February. As a result, investors focused their attention on buying and holding "safe" investments, such as bonds, dividend-paying stocks, and gold.

The Standard & Poor's 500 rose 1.3 percent in the first three months of 2013. The Dow Jones industrial average lost 0.7 percent so far this year, and the Nasdaq composite is up 0.5 percent.

It was S&P 500's its fifth-straight quarterly gain. It was also the index's worst quarter since the fourth quarter of 2012.

"I think this bull market is starting to show signs of fatigue," said Wayne Wilbanks, chief investment officer at Wilbanks, Smith, Thomas in Norfolk, Virginia, which manages roughly \$2.4 billion in assets.

It was all about safety this quarter.

Utility and health care stocks, which typically pay larger-than-average dividends and are less volatile than other stocks, rose 9 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively. Those two

sectors were among the laggards last year.

Riskier growth-oriented stocks, particularly in biotechnology, consumer discretionary and technology stocks, fared the worst. Among the biggest decliners this quarter, Twit-

bond market that includes Treasuries, corporate and other types of bonds, is up 1.9 percent this quarter.

Even gold did well this quarter. After getting slammed in 2013, gold rose nearly 7 percent in the first quarter of 2013.

and wait it out," said J.J. Kinnahan, chief strategist with TD Ameritrade.

Investors quickly had to shift to defense mode. Throughout the first three months of the year, there were signs that the U.S. economy was negatively impacted by

back on its bond-buying economic stimulus in late December, cutting its bond purchases from \$85 billion to \$75 billion a month. The Fed voted twice this quarter to further cut back the program, which now stands at \$55 billion a month.

There's a large group of traders and money managers who believe the Fed's bond-buying program helped push the stock market higher because it was designed to make bonds more expensive than stocks. Now that the Fed is pulling out of the market, the tailwind in the stock market is fading.

"We should expect much more volatility and more meager returns like this" Wilbanks said.

Looking forward, now that winter has subsided across much of the country, investors will turn their eyes to this Friday's jobs report. It is widely expected that the economic freeze from the winter storms is thawing, and the pent-up demand of the last three months should result in burst of activity in the second three months of the year.

Corporations will also start reporting their quarterly results in a few weeks, which will be a catalyst on where this market goes from here. On Monday, the Dow rose 134.60 points, or 0.8 percent, to 16,457.66, the S&P 500 rose 14.72 points, or 0.8 percent, to 1,872.34 and the Nasdaq composite rose 43.23 points, or 1 percent, to 4,198.99. □



Trader Joel Luccese, center, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Stocks rose broadly in afternoon trading Monday, March 31, 2014, as the market headed for its fifth straight quarterly gain. Microsoft led the technology sector higher.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

ter fell 27 percent, biotechnology company Celgene dropped 17 percent and Amazon.com fell 16 percent. Bonds were widely expected to do poorly in 2014 because the Federal Reserve was winding down its bond-buying program and the U.S. economy was improving. Instead, they did better than the stock market. The Barclays Aggregate Bond Index, a broad measure of the

Investors started off the quarter cautiously optimistic. The S&P 500 had risen 32 percent in 2013, including dividends, and was trading at an all-time high early in the year. There were signs that the U.S. economic recovery was accelerating. Few investors expected 2013's momentum to hold into this year, however.

"We had such an incredible year last year, people were willing to take a break

severe winter storms in December, January and February, which slowed down job creation, consumer spending and manufacturing nationwide.

Internationally, the tensions between Russia and the West over Ukraine drag on. Geopolitical uncertainty is never good for the stock market.

Then there's the Federal Reserve. The nation's central bank began to pull

AT&T's buyback may signal waning interest in Vodafone deal

MICHAEL J. de la MERCED

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If there were any doubts that AT&T's appetite was waning for a Vodafone takeover bid, the American telecommunications giant's latest potential stock buyback might erase them. AT&T said Monday that its board had authorized the repurchase of up to 300 million shares, or about 6 percent of its total shares outstanding. At Monday morning's stock price, that is worth a little under \$11 bil-

lion.

While the company has bought back stock in the past - 775 million shares since 2012 - the latest round reinforces the idea that it has turned its back on a takeover bid for Vodafone, at least anytime soon.

Two months ago,

AT&T disclosed that it was not in talks to buy Vodafone, a transaction that could cost more than \$100 billion. Under British takeover rules, that meant AT&T could not make another

run at a deal for six months unless invited to do so by Vodafone.

But Vodafone has other matters on its mind. Two weeks ago, it announced plans to buy Ono, a Spanish cable operator, for about \$10 billion.

The deal will add assets to Vodafone that many analysts say AT&T would not find appealing.

AT&T has capacity to make big deals, with \$3.4 billion in cash and short-term investments on hand at the end

of 2013 and an A3 credit rating from Moody's Investors Service.

But the company has limits, since it plans to keep its debt level at about 1.8 times adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization.

And if Vodafone intends to keep spending the proceeds it received from selling its 45 percent stake in Verizon Wireless back to Verizon - roughly \$60 billion in cash and \$60 billion in its former partner's stock

- AT&T is less likely to make a big play.

Just days before the Ono deal was formally announced,

AT&T was already hinting publicly that it planned to look elsewhere.

"We're seeing the window of opportunity in owning assets is closing," John J. Stephens, the company's chief financial officer, said at an industry conference. A spokesman for AT&T declined to comment Monday. □

J&J accepts \$4B Carlyle offer for diagnostics unit

NEW BRUNSWICK, New Jersey (AP) — Johnson & Johnson has accepted an offer of about \$4 billion from the private equity firm The Carlyle Group to buy its Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics business.

J&J said Monday that the deal for the blood-testing unit should close by mid-year.

The health care giant had said in January that Wash-

ington, D.C.-based Carlyle Group had offered \$4.15 billion for the business, and that it would talk to works councils and trade unions representing its employees before making a decision. The Ortho-Clinical business serves hospitals, testing laboratories and blood banks. It supplies equipment and chemicals to screen donated blood for HIV, hepatitis C and other serious diseases.

It also makes technology for advanced testing of blood to diagnose health conditions and to monitor medication effects.

Ortho Clinical Diagnostics is based in New Jersey and employs more than 4,500 employees. It runs factories in Rochester, New York; Pompano Beach, Florida; and Pencoed, Wales.

J&J CEO Alex Gorsky had said last year the company

was looking at strategic options for Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics, which doesn't meet the company's long-held strategy of focusing on businesses that rank first or second in their markets. Shares of J&J rose 78 cents to \$98.22 in afternoon trading Monday.

They had climbed more than 6 percent so far this year through Friday's close. □

Soda sales in US declining at fast pace

CANDICE CHOI
AP Food Industry Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Americans cut back on soda at an accelerated pace last year, bringing sales volume to the lowest level since 1995, according to a new report.

U.S. sales volume of carbonated soft drinks fell 3 percent in 2013, extending a streak of declines that began nearly a decade ago. It also represents a steeper drop than the 1.2 percent decline in 2012 and the 1 percent drop in 2011, according to an annual report by Beverage Digest, an industry tracker. The declines mean that 1.2 billion cases have been wiped from the industry since 1995. Each case represents 192 ounces.

Carbonated soft drinks still represent the biggest category in the beverage industry. But the popularity of longtime favorites like Coke, Pepsi and Dr Pepper is waning as a growing number of alternatives like flavored waters and energy drinks pop up in beverage aisles.

Soda is also fighting its bad image as a source of empty calories, with public health advocates blaming it for fueling weight gain.

Even diet sodas are suffering. Last year, for instance, Diet Coke's sales volume declined 6.8 percent, compared to a 0.5 percent drop for regular Coke, according to Beverage Digest. Diet Pepsi declined 6.9 percent, compared to a 3.6 percent decline for regular Pepsi.

Industry executives blame the trend in diet sodas on worries people have about artificial sweeteners. But diet sodas are also facing intensifying competition from the proliferation of lower-calorie alternatives, many of which are made with artificial sweeteners as well. Sparkling Ice, a small brand owned by TalkingRain, for instance, last year saw sales more than double, according to IRI, a Chicago-based market research firm. □

Fiat Chrysler can boost output to 6M cars a year

COLLEEN BARRY
AP Business Writer

TURIN, Italy (AP) — Fiat and Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne said Monday that the merged company will be able to increase production to more than 6 million cars a year, a level he has long said is the minimum for an automaker to compete in the global market.

Marchionne aims to complete the legal merger of Fiat and Chrysler by the end of 2014 to create Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, the world's seventh-largest automaker, and will outline a new multi-year business plan in Detroit in May.

"By 2018, Fiat will be able to make more than 6 million cars," Marchionne told reporters after Fiat shareholders' meeting in the Italian company's historic headquarters in Turin. "I don't want to give any details of the plan, but we are going in that direction."

The carmakers delivered a combined 4.4 million cars last year, and Marchionne said they aim to sell 4.5 million to 4.6 million this year, mostly on the strength of the U.S. and Asian markets. Marchionne had often cited the 6 million figure as a threshold automakers need to reach to be profitable in the increasingly crowded global market. But he has shied away in recent years from forecasting that Fiat Chrysler might achieve that level as sales in Europe bottomed out in the economic crisis.

Shares in Fiat rose 2.4 percent in Milan after Marchionne's upbeat forecast for production.

The CEO will detail strategy for the carmaker, including an update on his plans to raise production volumes in Fiat's under-utilized Italian plants of higher-margin Maserati- and Alfa Romeo-brand vehicles for export. The company is also likely

a hard-fought deal to buy the last remaining stake in January, clearing the way for the merger.

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles will have its legal headquarters in the Netherlands and fiscal headquarters in Britain. Shares will be trad-

As is customary at Fiat, individual shareholders in the company, many who have attended meetings for decades, were allotted five minutes each to address management. Shareholder Giovanni Antonini asked if Fiat Chrysler would orga-



Fiat Chairman John Elkann addresses shareholders in Turin, Italy, Monday, March 31, 2014. Fiat and Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne says the combined automaker aims to sell 4.5 million to 4.6 million cars this year. Marchionne addressed the last Fiat shareholders' meeting on Monday at the Italian carmaker's historic headquarters in Turin, Italy. The CEO aims to complete the merger of Fiat with U.S. carmaker Chrysler this year to create Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, the seventh-largest automaker with 4.4 million sales last year.

(AP Photo/Massimo Pinca)

to focus on boosting sales in China and Russia, high-growth markets where the company is behind competitors. He said he believes the company can finance the five-year plan without selling assets or raising capital "We can run this by purely financing on debt," Marchionne said.

Marchionne, who has been running Chrysler since it emerged from bankruptcy nearly five years ago, won

ed in New York and Milan. Marchionne told shareholders it would be "disingenuous" if he did not recognize the emotional aspects of merging two automakers with distinct histories.

"The truth, however, is that our strength today derives from the union of these two realities, from the fact that each will conserve its own identity and will make available its own strong-points," Marchionne said.

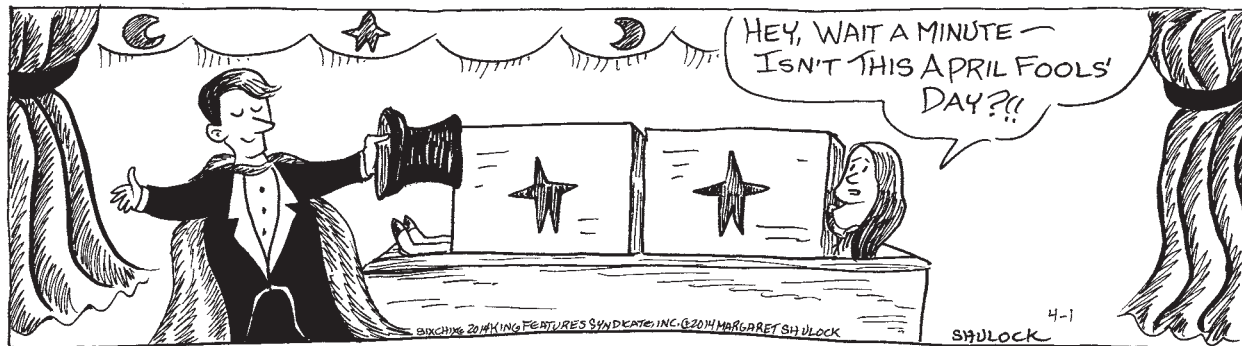
nize charters to Amsterdam to attend, saying "I would be sorry not to participate anymore."

Marchionne's response: No. The CEO told shareholders that he is in talks with Russia's largest bank, OAO Sberbank, on a joint venture to produce Jeeps in the first phase. Fiat and Sberbank signed a letter of intent for the venture in 2012, but no progress has been announced. □

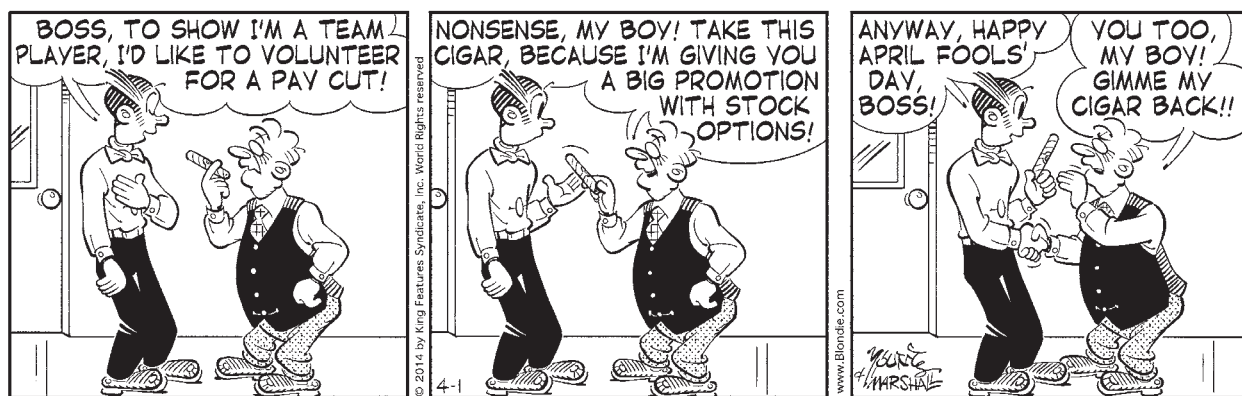
Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

	7			5			1	
5		9			6			7
				8			5	
	3		8		9			
2		1		7		8		4
			1		4		7	
	5			9				
4			3			5		1
	8			1			4	

Difficulty Level ★★

4/01

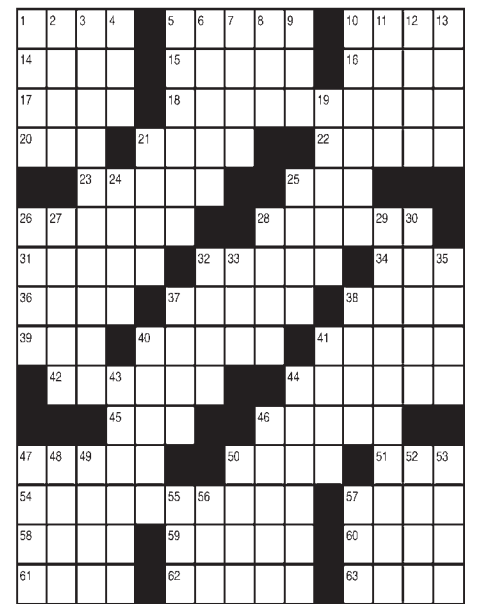
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

5	1	6	7	9	8	4	3	2
7	3	8	6	2	4	9	1	5
2	9	4	1	3	5	8	7	6
6	2	1	4	8	9	7	5	3
8	5	9	3	1	7	2	6	4
4	7	3	5	6	2	1	8	9
9	6	2	8	7	3	5	4	1
3	8	5	2	4	1	6	9	7
1	4	7	9	5	6	3	2	8

ACROSS

- 1 Terra firma
- 5 Scour
- 10 Performing __; ballet, opera, etc.
- 14 Vase-shaped pitcher
- 15 On the __; free to the customer
- 16 Spanish bull
- 17 Dark blue
- 18 Dwight or Mamie
- 20 Recolor
- 21 Use a sieve
- 22 Beginning; start
- 23 Boulders
- 25 Garden tool
- 26 TV's "Montana"
- 28 Coarse-toothed cutting tool
- 31 Vote into office
- 32 Golfer Tiger
- 34 Racket
- 36 __ over; scoot
- 37 __ and groom
- 38 Hot stuff from Mauna Loa
- 39 TV's "Murder, Wrote"
- 40 Dirties
- 41 "Terrific!"
- 42 Where to apply deodorant
- 44 Woman's bow
- 45 Have a bug
- 46 Lively dance
- 47 Bowling term
- 50 Relax in a tub
- 51 Tit for __
- 54 Lawmaker
- 57 Staple in an Asian diet
- 58 Region
- 59 Skating rinks
- 60 __ run; four-bagger
- 61 Command to a sled dog team
- 62 Coldly brief
- 63 Singles



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

4/1/14

Monday's Puzzle Solved

3	"Land"; tune from the "Peter Pan" musical	KEY	ALMS
4	Moistureless	ONES	ROOT
5	Arab ruler's title	IDLE	MADE
6	Hairdos	SPARE	ANEW
7	Reddish-brown color	SANE	MID
8	Utilize	ADROIT	LABRADOR
9	Franklin, to friends	SOUND	NOBLE RUE
10	Does penance	HUMS	RIFLE PINS
11	Arguments	EBB	DANTE PONCE
12	Spruce or sequoia	STATUTES	RACKET
13	of; rather	OBI	PORK
19	Hula __; classic toys from the 1950s	FETA	ONLOOKERS
21	Word to a pest	AXES	NOOKS TALE
24	A single time	DART	ASSET SPUD
25	Lie low	EMMY	LEADS SRS
26	Dress edges		
27	Luau greeting		
28	Fishing poles		
29	Movie based on a book, e.g.		
30	Married women		
32	Court order		
33	Lubricate		
35	a one; none		
37	Sore as a		
38	Sneak around		
40	007 and others		
41	Pout		
43	Singer Carey		
44	Rough; not fine		
46	Combines		
47	Close angrily		
48	Lima's nation		
49	Eras		
50	Celebrity		
52	High point		
53	Trevino's pegs		
55	"Thanks a __!"		
56	"__ Maria"		
57	Fraternity letter		

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4/1/14

Classifieds

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1 br Divi Links
1 br , sleeps 4, Blding E floating week May to Dec, \$1500 for quick sale. Local 583-8000 ext. 2022 until April 4th then ext 2010
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bernieandsally@comcast.net

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1 Bedroom wk 13 room #342A 1 Bedroom wk 14 room #340C (SATCheck in) \$8500 each. pool/ocean view Call: (297) 562-0712
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201704

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2 bedroom, Platinum Ocean Front \$ right on the palm Beach \$30K Marriott Suft Club 2 Bedroom Platinum Ocean View, right on the palm Beach \$16K 2 Bedroom Platinum Garden view \$15K. More info call: (297)562-0712.
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

201704

FOR SALE

Red Hot Weeks Resales La Cabana BRC

1 Bedroom wk 11/12 room #414-A Pool/Ocean view Sunday check in price \$20.000,- both. Call: (297) 562-0712
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

201704

FOR SALE

Divi Village Red Hot Weeks Resales

Studio wk 12 room #8103 20 week remain on contract 8 can be acclerated. non mandatory maintenance fee \$4500 Studio wk 13 room #6107 25 weeks remain on the contact more info: Call: (297) 562-0712
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201704

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201570



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OV -\$42k
Plat Plus NY 52 OV- \$49k
GOLD Season
OS \$10k OV \$9500
Oceanfront \$17k
3 BEDRM OV \$17,000

Marriott Aruba Ocean Club

Platinum 2B OV \$18k
Oceanfront PLAT \$29k
Platinum 1B OV \$11,500
Gold season 2B OV \$9,000
Oceanfront 2B \$14,500
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Ocean garbage frustrates search for Flight 370

NICK PERRY

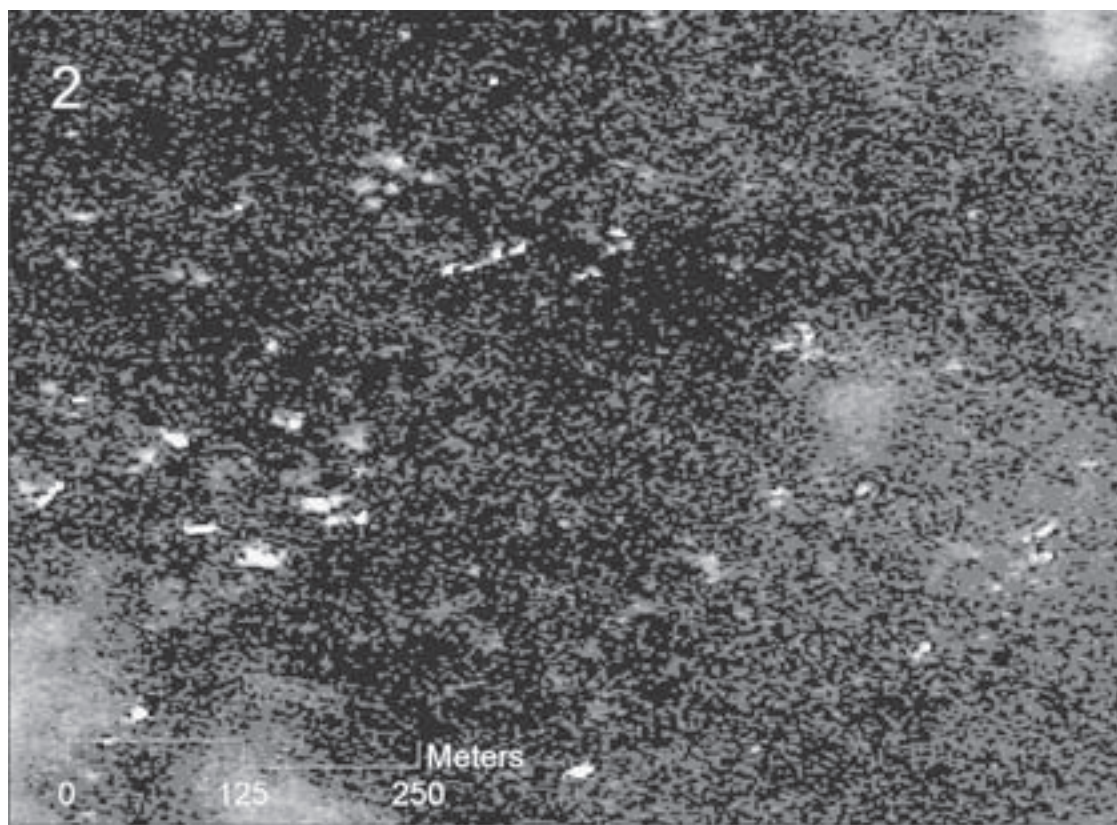
Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand

(AP) — Sometimes the object spotted in the water is a snarled fishing line. Or a buoy. Or something that might once have been the lid to an ice box. Not once — not yet at least — has it been a clue.

Anticipation has repeatedly turned into frustration in the search for signs of Flight 370 as objects spotted from planes in a new search area west of Australia have turned out to be garbage. It's a time-wasting distraction for air and sea crews searching for debris from the Malaysia Airlines flight that vanished March 8.

It also points to wider problems in the world's oceans. "The ocean is like a plastic soup, bulked up with the croutons of these larger items," said Los Angeles



In this file imagery taken by the Thaichote satellite on March 24, 2014 and released March 27, 2014 by Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency (GISTDA), a part of about 300 objects floating in the Indian Ocean near the search area for the missing Malaysia Airlines jetliner are shown.

Associated Press



An object floats in the southern Indian Ocean in this picture taken from a Royal New Zealand Air Force P-3K2 Orion aircraft searching for missing Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, Saturday, March 29, 2014.

Associated Press

captain Charles Moore, an environmental advocate credited with bringing attention to an ocean gyre between Hawaii and California known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, which by some accounts is about the size of Texas.

The world's oceans have four more of these flotsam-collecting vortexes, Moore said, and the searchers, in an area about 1,850 kilometers (1,150 miles) west of Perth, have stumbled onto the eastern edge of a gyre in the Indian Ocean.

"It's like a toilet bowl that swirls but doesn't flush," said Moore.

The garbage patches are nothing like a typical city dump. In fact, most of the trash can't even be seen: It's composed of tiny bits of plastic bobbing just below the surface.

The larger items also tend to be plastic and are often

fishing-related, Moore said. Though, he added, he has come across light bulbs, a toilet seat, and, bobbing off the California coast, a refrigerator, complete with defrosted orange juice.

Seattle oceanographer Curtis Ebbesmeyer has been studying the phenomena of ocean debris for years. He said there are smaller collections of garbage within the gyres.

"If you go into a house you'll find dust bunnies," he said. "The ocean has a mass of dust bunnies, each moving about 10 miles a day."

Ebbesmeyer said he's fascinated by what happens to the trash that spews from the hundreds of shipping containers lost overboard from cargo ships each year. He said there's one that keeps belching out Lego pieces onto the beaches of Cornwall, England. Another spilled 2,000

computer monitors. Another released thousands of pairs of Nike sneakers.

Sometimes, he said, the containers themselves can become hazards as they float around for months, buoyed by plastic objects inside or the air trapped behind watertight doors.

Trash also gets into the ocean after being washed down rivers or swept up in tsunamis, Ebbesmeyer said. Scientists are particularly worried about small and seemingly ubiquitous pieces of plastic that can be from shopping bags, plastic water bottles, or other household items. Waves break the items up into smaller pieces.

Denise Hardesty, a research scientist for Australian science agency CSIRO, said the studies she's been involved with conservatively estimate there are between 5,000 and 7,000 small pieces of plastic per square kilometer in the waters around Australia.

She said two-thirds of the seabirds she's performed necropsies upon have ingested at least some plastic, and one particular bird had swallowed 175 pieces. Another bird, she said, had swallowed an entire glow stick longer than a finger. Such sticks are used by fishermen to attract fish underwater. "It takes 400 or 500 years for lots of types of plastics to completely break down," Hardesty said. "It just goes into smaller and smaller bits. You even find plastics in plankton — that's how small it gets." Hardesty said while she finds plenty of plastic in the ocean, she doesn't typically spot many larger objects. She said she does find trash like cans, bottles and candy wrappers floating near urban centers, but most of it tends to get washed ashore.

American sailor James Burwick said he's twice crossed the Indian Ocean from Africa to Australia. He said the sea was too wild to see much trash but he did feel bumps against the bottom of his boat, and an old fishing net once got caught around his vessel. □

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In this July 15, 2013 file photo, actress Shirley Jones poses for a portrait at her home in Los Angeles. Associated Press

Shirley Jones postpones 80th birthday skydive

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Actress Shirley Jones is celebrating her 80th birthday on the ground, instead of skydiving as she had planned.

A spokesman for the "Partridge Family" actress said Monday that Jones agreed to postpone the jump after her sons and grandchildren asked her to reconsider.

Jones announced last week that she planned to celebrate her birthday by jumping from a plane

for the first time, something she said she wanted to do all her life. She was inspired by President George H.W. Bush, who skydived on several of his birthdays, including his 85th in 2009.

Spokesman Edward Lozzi said Jones' family held an intervention Sunday to prevent the actress from going through with the jump planned for Monday. Jones insists she still plans to skydive, though no date has been set. □

Nicole Richie bringing popular Web series to VH1

NEW YORK (AP) — Nicole Richie's Twitter feed has launched her return to television.

The 32-year-old former reality TV star-turned-designer, who is also an author and actress, is heading to VH1.

#CandidlyNicole is based on her popular AOL Web series, which was adapted from her Twitter feed, made up of her musings about everything from parenting to pop culture to random observations.

The VH1 version will feature all new content in eight half-hour episodes premiering July 17.

In an interview last year with The Associated Press, Richie said she was interested in eventually bringing the series to television but viewed an online start



This Dec. 6, 2013 file photo shows TV personality and fashion designer Nicole Richie at the launch of SK Planet's Styletag fashion app at Henri Bendel in New York. Associated Press

as "a nice way to experiment."

Richie starred in the TV series "The Simple Life" with Paris Hilton and was a mentor on NBC's "Fashion Star." □

Engaged Johnny Depp shows off 'chick's ring'

LOUISE WATT

Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Johnny Depp showed off a diamond engagement ring that he called a "chick's ring" on Monday — indirectly confirming rumors of his engagement to actress Amber Heard. Asked whether he was engaged, the "Pirates of the Caribbean" star replied: "The fact that I'm wearing a chick's ring on my finger is probably a dead giveaway. Not very subtle." He laughed as he lifted up his left hand and displayed a single diamond on a band around his ring finger. His comments follow months of unconfirmed reports of his engagement to actress Heard, 27, who starred alongside Kevin Costner in "3 Days to Kill" released in the U.S. earlier this year. Depp and Heard starred together in "The Rum Diary," filmed in Puerto Rico in 2009. In 2012, Depp split with his partner of 14 years, French model-singer Vanessa Paradis. They have two children. In a trademark off-the-wall comment, Depp said: "I think that I would be better at



Actor Johnny Depp, with a diamond ring on his left hand, attends a promotional event for his new movie "Transcendence" in Beijing, China, Monday, March 31, 2014. Associated Press

making women's shoes than I would be at wedding planning. I can't plan anything. I'm really bad at that stuff." The 50-year-old actor was in Beijing to promote his new movie "Transcendence." Depp plays a terminally ill scientist who downloads his mind into a computer in the sci-fi drama that asks: What if we could upload a human mind into a computer? It also stars Rebecca Hall as Depp's wife and Morgan Freeman.

"The technology that exists within the film, what I find most fascinating is

that a lot of it exists already and by all accounts from scholars and professors and scientists that species of technology is not far away, that kind of artificial intelligence," said Depp in an interview. "It's one of those films that one person is forced to make a choice in an instant, when your loved one is dying and you have a split-second decision if you have the ability to upload their consciousness into a computer, would you do that? It's quite a strange decision to make but for love I think we would all do it." □

Elton John to have 'quiet' wedding with partner



In this Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2005 file photo, British musician Elton John, right, and his longtime partner David Furnish, smile to the media and the public after their civil ceremony, at the Guildhall in the town of Windsor, England. Associated Press

The Associated Press

Elton John and his partner David Furnish are planning

a low-profile wedding in May, following a change in British law allowing gay

marriages.

The singer told NBC's Today show that he wants to celebrate "very quietly," and added: "It will be a joyous occasion and we will have our children."

The two men, who have been in a civil partnership since 2005, have two children.

In quotes released on NBC's website Monday, the singer said: "We shouldn't just say 'Oh, well, we have a civil partnership, we're not going to bother to get married'. We will get married."

Same-sex marriages were allowed for the first time in Britain Saturday, when a new marriage law came into effect. □



This March 13, 2014 file photo released by Starpix shows Gloria Steinem at the premiere of the documentary "Paycheck to Paycheck: The Life & Times of Katrina Gilbert," in New York. Associated Press

Steinem, Alicia Keys named honorees of annual DVF awards

NEW YORK (AP) — Designer Diane von Furstenberg, who made fashion news this year with the 40th anniversary of her famous wrap dress, is honoring an icon of the women's movement: Gloria Steinem.

Steinem, who turned 80 last week, will be receiving the Lifetime Leadership Award at the annual DVF awards Friday evening in a ceremony at the United Nations.

Also being honored: Singer Alicia Keys, who receives the Inspiration Award.

Some high-profile presenters will be on hand, including Meryl Streep and Sarah Jessica Parker.

The DVF Awards were created in 2010 by von Furstenberg and The Diller-von Furstenberg Family Foundation to recognize and support "women who are using their resources, commitment and visibility to transform the lives of other women." □

Pharrell Williams named as coach on 'The Voice'

NEW YORK (AP) -- NBC has signed singer-songwriter Pharrell Williams as a coach for the upcoming seventh season of its musical competition series "The Voice."

Williams scored an Oscar nomination this year for his song "Happy" from the film "Despicable Me 2." He also had a Grammy-winning collaboration with Daft Punk on the dance hit "Get Lucky."

He was an adviser to team Usher on season four of "The Voice," and performed the song "Blurred Lines" with Robin Thicke on the show last May.



In this March 25, 2014 photo, Pharrell Williams poses in Los Angeles. NBC has signed Williams as a coach for the upcoming seventh season of its musical competition series "The Voice."

Associated Press

NBC said it would announce the remainder of the coaching line-up at a later date. □

New John Wayne biography hits target dead center

DOUGLASS K. DANIEL
Associated Press

Who's that on the cover of Scott Eyman's splendid biography of Hollywood's most enduring movie star? Surely that wavy-haired young fellow in the suit and tie isn't John Wayne. Where's the Stetson, the Winchester rifle, the six-shooter, the boots and spurs?

It would be easy to sell "John Wayne: The Life and Legend" with a picture of the Ringo Kid from "Stagecoach" (1939), the movie that made Wayne a star. How about the tough Marine sergeant from "Sands of Iwo Jima" (1949)? Or a picture of the one-eyed marshal Rooster Cogburn from "True Grit" (1969), the role for which Wayne won an Oscar?

Eyman presents John Wayne as what he really was — a generally good-natured actor and filmmaker who created and maintained a persona that Americans took to heart. It didn't happen overnight or by accident. Wayne worked hard to learn his craft, developed a keen understanding of the movie business and became wildly successful at selling his product.

The family of the boy born Marion Robert Morrison in 1907 in Winterset, Iowa, moved to California when he was 7 or 8 and eventually settled in the Los Angeles suburb of Glendale. His father, Clyde Morrison, failed at nearly every business he tried and died a few years before his son reached stardom.

That achievement never seemed to impress Mary Morrison, who would accept her oldest son's generosity over the years with more sneer than smile while doting on his younger brother.

Known by the nickname "Duke," the Glendale High class president hoped that football as well as an A average would earn him an education at the University of Southern California.

When an injury cost him his scholarship, Duke turned to work as a propman at the Fox studio to earn enough money to stay in school. Director John Ford took the handsome young go-getter under his wing and began giving him small roles. (Duke had appeared in high school plays and had worked backstage there, too.)

A big break ended his col-



This book cover image released by Simon & Schuster shows "John Wayne: The Life and Legend," by Scott Eyman. Associated Press

lege plans. But the newly named John Wayne — others at the studio came up with that moniker and he never assumed it legally — was wholly unprepared for the starring role in "The Big Trail" (1930). In spite of studio publicity for the picture and its young lead, the widescreen epic directed by Raoul Walsh failed at the box office. Two more duds ended Wayne's contract at Fox.

For much of the 1930s, Wayne appeared in some dramas and serials but mostly in low-budget Westerns shot in just days at shoestring studios like Monogram and Mascot. His mentor Ford allowed him to languish — and to learn — until he found the right role for Wayne as the star of "Stagecoach."

Wayne "had incrementally put together the pieces of a screen character over 10 long years — a voice, a name, a walk that would

grow more pronounced in the future, an overall attitude," Eyman writes. While Wayne considered trying to parlay his new stature into a career as an all-around actor, the author says, he realized that John Wayne was a character worth developing.

For nearly a half-century, Wayne excelled in the make-believe business. Consider that America's favorite movie cowboy preferred a yacht over a saddle. He might bashfully kiss a girl on-screen but was an unfaithful young husband when the cameras stopped rolling. The nation's favorite movie soldier never served in the military — a sore point for those who found his hawkish views on the Vietnam War nothing short of hypocritical given that he put his career first during World War II.

Wayne's lack of military service and his support of Hollywood's red scare are examples of Eyman's evenhanded treatment of complicated subjects and the solid research that backs up his conclusions. People turned off by Wayne's right-wing politics and the simplistic themes of his movies often underestimated his intelligence. He was a debater in high school, president of its Latin Society and a member of its newspaper staff. As an adult he was a demon chess player and an avid reader — imagine the star of "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance" reading "The Lord of the Rings."

Another surprise: Wayne listened to people with whom he disagreed and respected their opinions. He wasn't bothered if his own political and social views didn't match the tenor of the times or even his personal relationships. In 1971 he said that he believed in white supremacy "until the blacks are educated to a point of responsibility." Yet he was loyal and generous to friends regardless of race. □

The Christian Penumbra



ROSS DOUTHAT
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Here is a seeming paradox of American life. On the one hand, there is a broad social-science correlation between religious faith and various social goods - health and happiness, upward mobility, social trust, charitable work and civic participation. Yet at the same time, some of the most religious areas of the country - the Bible Belt, the deepest South - struggle mightily with poverty, poor health, political corruption and social disarray. Part of this paradox can be resolved by looking at nonreligious variables like race. But part of it reflects an important fact about religion in America: The social goods associated with faith flow almost exclusively from religious participation, not from affiliation or nominal belief. And where practice ceases or diminishes, in what you might call America's "Christian penumbra," the remaining residue of religion can be socially damaging instead. Consider, as a case study, the data on divorce. Earlier this year, a pair of demographers released a study showing that regions with heavy populations of conservative Protestants had higher-than-average divorce rates, even when controlling for poverty and race.

Their finding was correct, but incomplete. As the sociologist Charles Stokes pointed out, practicing conservative Protestants have much lower divorce rates, and practicing believers generally divorce less frequently than the secular and unaffiliated. But the lukewarmly religious are a different matter. What Stokes calls "nominal" conservative Protestants, who attend church less than twice a month, have higher divorce rates even than the nonreligious. And you can find similar patterns with other indicators - out-of-wedlock births, for instance, are rarer among religious-engaged evangelical Christians, but nominal evangelicals are a very different story. It isn't hard to see why this might be. In the Christian penumbra, certain religious expectations could endure (a bias toward early marriage, for instance) without support networks for people struggling to live up to them. Or specific moral ideas could still have purchase without being embedded in a plausible life script. (For instance, residual pro-life sentiment could increase out-of-wedlock births.) Or religious impulses could survive in dark forms rather than positive ones - leaving structures of hypocrisy intact and ratifying social hierarchies, without inculcating virtue, charity or responsibility.

And it isn't hard to see places in American life where these pat-

terns could be at work. Among those working-class whites whose identification with Christianity is mostly a form of identity politics, for instance. Or among second-generation Hispanic immigrants who have drifted from their ancestral Catholicism. Or in African-American communities where the church is respected as an institution without attracting many young men on Sunday morning. Seeing some of the problems in our culture through this lens might be useful for the religious and secular alike. For nonbelievers inclined to look down on the alleged backwardness of the Bible Belt, it would be helpful to recognize that at least some the problems they see at work reflect traditional religion's growing weakness rather than its potency.

For believers, meanwhile, the Christian penumbra's pathologies could just be seen as a kind of theological vindication - proof, perhaps, of the New Testament admonition that it's much worse to be lukewarm than hot or cold. But it's better to regard these problems as a partial indictment of America's churches: Not only because their failure to reach the working class and the younger generation is making the penumbra steadily bigger, but because a truly healthy religious community should be capable of influencing even the loosely attached somewhat for the better. The problems in the penumbra also have an unacknowledged place in our current controversies over religious liberty, from the debates (which reached the Supreme Court last week) over the scope of religious exemptions from the health care law's contraceptive mandate, to the legal questions raised by the advance of same-sex marriage.

These arguments turn on constitutional issues, competing visions of freedom, the scope of pluralism versus the rights of gays and women. But they're also partially about what kind of institutions are best equipped to address social problems in an individualistic age and whether we should want the Christian penumbra to be reclaimed for religion or become more thoroughly secularized instead.

Among religious conservatives, not surprisingly, the hope is that traditional forms of faith - if left to build, or rebuild, without being constantly disfavored, pressured and policed - can make a kind of comeback and fill part of the void their own decline has left.

On the secular side, though, there's a sense that there's a better way - that a more expansive state can offer many of the benefits associated with a religious community, but in a more enlightened, tolerant, individual-respecting form. And if delivering these benefits requires co-opting or constraining religious actors - be they charities and schools or business owners - well, that's either a straightforward win-win or a relatively modest price to pay. In this sense, the Christian penumbra isn't just a zone of social disorder. It's a field of ideological battle. □



Jobs and Skills and Zombies



PAUL KRUGMAN
© 2014 New York Times

A few months ago, Jamie Dimon, the chief executive of JPMorgan Chase, and Marlene Seltzer, the chief executive of Jobs for the Future, published an article in Politico titled "Closing the Skills Gap." They began portentously: "Today, nearly 11 million Americans are unemployed. Yet, at the same time, 4 million jobs sit unfilled" - supposedly demonstrating "the gulf between the skills job seekers currently have and the skills employers need."

Actually, in an ever-changing economy there are always some positions unfilled even while some workers are unemployed, and the current ratio of vacancies to unemployed workers is far below normal. Meanwhile, multiple careful studies have found no support for claims that inadequate worker skills explain high unemployment.

But the belief that America suffers from a severe "skills gap" is one of those things that everyone important knows must be true, because everyone they know says it's true. It's a prime example of a zombie idea - an idea that should have been killed by evidence, but refuses to die.

And it does a lot of harm. Before we get there, however, what do we actually know about skills and jobs?

Think about what we would expect to find if there really were a skills shortage. Above all, we

should see workers with the right skills doing well, while only those without those skills are doing badly. We don't.

Yes, workers with a lot of formal education have lower unemployment than those with less, but that's always true, in good times and bad. The crucial point is that unemployment remains much higher among workers at all education levels than it was before the financial crisis. The same is true across occupations: workers in every major category are doing worse than they were in 2007.

Some employers do complain that they're finding it hard to find workers with the skills they need. But show us the money: If employers are really crying out for certain skills, they should be willing to offer higher wages to attract workers with those skills. In reality, however, it's very hard to find groups of workers getting big wage increases, and the cases you can find don't fit the conventional wisdom at all. It's good, for example, that workers who know how to operate a sewing machine are seeing significant raises in wages, but I very much doubt that these are the skills people who make a lot of noise about the alleged gap have in mind.

And it's not just the evidence on unemployment and wages that refutes the skills-gap story. Careful surveys of employers - like those recently conducted by researchers at both MIT and the Boston Consulting Group - similarly find, as the consulting group declared, that "worries of a skills gap crisis are overblown."

The one piece of evidence you might cite in favor of the skills-gap story is the sharp rise in long-term unemployment, which could be evidence that many workers don't have what employers want. But it isn't. At this point, we know a lot about the long-term unemployed, and they're pretty much indistinguishable in skills

from laid-off workers who quickly find new jobs. So what's their problem? It's the very fact of being out of work, which makes employers unwilling even to look at their qualifications.

So how does the myth of a skills shortage not only persist, but remain part of what "everyone knows"? Well, there was a nice illustration of the process last fall, when some news media reported that 92 percent of top executives said there was, indeed, a skills gap. The basis for this claim? A telephone survey in which executives were asked, "Which of the following do you feel best describes the 'gap' in the U.S. workforce skills gap?" followed by a list of alternatives. Given the loaded question, it's actually amazing that 8 percent of the respondents were willing to declare that there was no gap.

The point is that influential people move in circles in which repeating the skills-gap story - or, better yet, writing about skill gaps in media outlets like Politico - is a badge of seriousness, an assertion of tribal identity. And the zombie shambles on.

Unfortunately, the skills myth - like the myth of a looming debt crisis - is having dire effects on real-world policy. Instead of focusing on the way disastrously wrongheaded fiscal policy and inadequate action by the Federal Reserve have crippled the economy and demanding action, important people piously wring their hands about the failings of American workers.

Moreover, by blaming workers for their own plight, the skills myth shifts attention away from the spectacle of soaring profits and bonuses even as employment and wages stagnate. Of course, that may be another reason corporate executives like the myth so much.

So we need to kill this zombie, if we can, and stop making excuses for an economy that punishes workers. □

Chefs Find Political Waters Anything but Tepid

KIM SEVERSON

© 2014 New York Times

CLEMSON, S.C. - Pete Matsko expected a little pushback when he posted a sarcastic sign banning concealed weapons from Backstreets Pub & Grill, his beer and burger bar in this college town, but he did not expect to become a national target.

Within weeks, he was slammed with so many online attacks and harassing phone calls that he changed his number and started asking the police to open his mail.

A new concealed-weapons law in South Carolina turned his pub into a battlefield in America's culture wars. Like an increasing number of bar and restaurant owners around the country, Matsko discovered that his politics can matter more than what he serves. As the position restaurants hold in American culture grows, so too does the list of issues on which chefs are asked to make a stand. Refusing to bake a cake for a gay wedding, requesting that a woman not breast-feed at the table or trying to prevent a diner from wearing a gun can have serious business implications.

"It's almost like restaurants have to have a political strategist on board now when they put together their marketing plan," said Andrew Freeman, a San Francisco-based consultant to the restaurant and hotel industry.

The shift is as much a reflection of a nation deeply divided on social issues as it is about the changing role of restaurants and chefs.

"We've become the national dinner table," said David McMillan, an owner of the coastal restaurant Drunken Jack's in Murrells Inlet, S.C., and chairman of the South Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association.

"It's more than just cooking food," he said. "We have to be allergen experts and nutritional experts and now Second Amendment experts."

Restaurants have long

been social barometers, sometimes setting informal public policy by how they do business. In Northern states, a de facto set of Jim Crow laws were enforced by racially segregated restaurants. In the South, lunch-counter protests helped dismantle the region's formal segregation.

ner table and provide a community forum.

"It's interesting that we started to go to Starbucks to look at the paper together and have coffee together and now we're having a gun discussion there," he said, referring to a public statement in the fall by Chief Executive

Matsko, who owns two handguns, decided to post a sign in his pub banning them.

"On some nights you have college kids wall to wall in here drinking," he said. "You don't want a gun in here."

On reflection, he said he might have been better

ment.

"We the People' are happy to go elsewhere," Sean Parnell, the author of "Outlaw Platoon: Heroes, Renegades, Infidels, and the Brotherhood of War in Afghanistan," said on Twitter. Although the state's restaurant and lodging association took no position on



Decorations above the bar at Backstreets Pub and Grill in Clemson, S.C., March 27, 2014. South Carolina's new concealed-weapons law turned the restaurant into a battleground in America's culture wars after owner Pete Matsko banned guns, resulting in a social media backlash and the discovery that his politics can matter more than what he serves.

(Mike Belleme/The New York Times)

tion laws.

Some celebrity chefs like Tom Colicchio, Alice Waters, Marcus Samuelsson and Jean-Georges Vongerichten embrace their roles as food activists and political players, speaking publicly on issues and hosting big-ticket campaign fundraisers.

Other restaurants contribute to the social debate through foundations that can sometimes bring controversy. Chick-fil-A was a target in 2012 after reports showed its foundation gave millions of dollars in donations to groups fighting gay rights.

Restaurants are no longer just places to eat, said Rich Harrill, acting director of the School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management at the University of South Carolina. They are stand-ins for the family din-

Howard Schultz in which he asked gun owners to not bring weapons into the company's stores.

Still, most restaurateurs want to run a business without controversy. In states with changing gun laws, that has become a challenge.

In February, South Carolina joined a handful of mostly Southern states that allow people with permits to take concealed guns into bars and restaurants. There are two caveats: Armed patrons cannot drink alcohol, and restaurants can opt out by posting a sign banning guns.

In a state with more than 230,000 such permits and a large population that grew up with guns, the policy had strong support from many state lawmakers and both candidates in the upcoming governor's race.

off using the official state-designed sign instead of his own.

It read, "If you are such a loser that you feel a need to carry a gun with you when you go out, I do not want your business." The sentence followed with a derogatory term used for an obnoxious person.

The sign was up for about a month before things exploded on St. Patrick's Day. Someone posted a photograph of the sign on Twitter. It was posted on the AR-15 Gun Owners of America Facebook page. His sleepy entry on the crowdsourced restaurant review site Yelp jumped from a few reviews to hundreds. His stars dropped from four to one. Reactions on Yelp and in other social media questioned Matsko's dedication to the U.S. Constitution and the Second Amend-

the new law, some members say having to post a sign barring guns is akin to putting up a scarlet letter. Many are still deciding what to do.

One is Sean Brock, a well-regarded Southern chef with restaurants in South Carolina and Nashville, Tenn.

He shot his first gun when he was 8 and sleeps beside a 9-millimeter handgun every night. But he doesn't want guns in his Husk restaurants.

"It's a bit strange to me that you think you need to carry a gun when you're having a cheeseburger," Brock said.

Still, he and his partners have not decided whether to put up signs prohibiting guns.

"The pressure to make the right move is intense," he said. □